

A
LETTER
 TO THE
PRINCE OF WALES,
 ON
 A SECOND APPLICATION
 TO
PARLIAMENT,

To discharge Debts wantonly contracted since May, 1787.

“ His Majesty could not however expect or desire the assistance of this House, but on a well-grounded expectation, that the Prince will avoid contracting any debts in future, and his Majesty has the satisfaction to observe, that the Prince has given the fullest assurance of HIS determination to confine his future expences **WITHIN** his income, and had settled a plan, and fixed an order in those expences, which it was trusted, would effectually secure the execution of his intentions ”

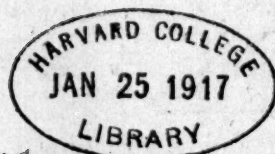
King's Message delivered to the House of Commons, May, 1787.

“ The best, and perhaps **ONLY** security for the preservation of the Hereditary Monarchy, is to **PREVENT** its being oppressive to the People-- ”.

**EIGHTH EDITION, WITH NOTES, AND A POSTSCRIPT
 ENLARGED.**

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G. F. Parkman fund

1795

PREFACE.

MAY 30, 1795.

THE rapidity with which the former editions of this Letter have been sold, demonstrates that the country, indignant at the little regard shewn by the Prince of Wales to the distress of the times, and to the sanctity of his own engagements, resents with becoming warmth, a conduct as impolitic, as it is universally felt and acknowledged to be shameful and iniquitous.

The question agitated in the House of Commons on the 14th instant, was of the utmost importance to the internal quiet of the empire, and may ultimately affect the life, property and personal liberty of every individual in the British dominions; the issue which it has had, tends to favor the sanguinary views of those who wish to convert our night-cellars into revolutionary tribunals, and to erect guillotines in all our public squares. Even the interests of posterity are involved in this unfortunate, this injudicious question, and the gentlemen who have contended for

the payment of debts which the nation has certainly no right to discharge, and which it ought not to have known, would have done much better by reflecting, that such a measure would give irresistible force to the arguments of those who object to the *expence*, and deny the *utility* of Monarchy; they should have well considered the justice of the application; the *expediency* of acceding to it, and above all, whether from the temper of the times, and the perilous state of the country, the very credit and existence of Parliament might not be endangered by complying with what was evidently its duty to have peremptorily rejected. It may not have occurred to them perhaps, that, by even condescending to *discuss* the subject of the Prince's debts, they have justified the clamor of those who are the most violent in favor of democracy, while by admitting that those debts *ought* to be discharged, they have proved themselves to be very unthrifty, if not very unfaithful stewards of the public money. The question well analysed, and reduced to plain matter of fact, was, whether the Prince of Wales shall be allowed to impoverish and dishonor the country by profusion and bad example; whether

he shall be permitted to lavish, with or without control, the property of others; OR, whether the COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN, faithful to themselves and to their constituents, would discharge the trust reposed in them like BRITONS, and spurn a request which, stripped of the forms prescribed by the constitution, is neither more nor less than a DEMAND, and a demand of such a nature as to leave no doubt, in even the most sceptical mind, what we have to expect from the justice and generosity of his Royal Highness, were we unhappily left at the mercy of either? It is our boast, and certainly our felicity, that we have *other* and *better* securities; pray heaven it may never be necessary to recur to them! The report that Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan intended to vote for the payment of debts, contracted in direct violation of a solemn and positive engagement to Parliament, appears to be nearer allied to truth than is consistent with the obligations which these gentlemen voluntarily imposed upon themselves, and which they stand pledged to perform, if their repeated declarations to the different popular societies to which they have of late years paid unremitting court, were ever

meant to be realised. The sincerity of their attachment to the cause of the people, which has long been questioned, is now no longer doubtful. Their conduct on the 14th instant has decided a controversy no otherwise interesting to the nation, than from the little portion of good faith and public virtue which exist in the country. The opportunity was certainly favorable to the recovery of their faded reputation, if the rectitude and vigor of their minds had been equal to the effort; but they were apprehensive perhaps of appearing, not in the engaging and amiable light of wise and faithful counsellors to his Royal Highness, but as accomplices in the shameful prodigality which has degraded him in the opinion of those who would much rather have cause to adore, than to execrate him, and who are grieved to behold him brought forward, not in the exalted and enviable character of heir apparent to the British diadem, not as a Prince entitled to esteem, reverence, and affection, but as a mendicant, to relieve whose necessities our pockets are reluctantly and disdainfully opened! The House of Commons has indeed voted an establishment as unprecedented as it is unmerited, but has the

nation concurred in the vote?——No! The general voice is decidedly against it, and the advocates for parliamentary reform contend more forcibly than ever for the necessity of cleansing the Augean stable, before its accumulated and pestilential filth contaminates and poisons the whole atmosphere. No wonder that one of the gentlemen, who has partaken of the profusion at Carleton House, kept aloof from danger that menaced his popularity; his patriotism, lame and defective, halted on the day of trial between the heir apparent and the people; for the gentleman has *courted* both, and having *pledged* himself to both, would no doubt have been happy with *either dear charmer*,

*But as they thus teased him together,
To neither a word would he say.*

His friend and patron, more manly and correct in sentiment and in conduct, faced the danger, and deprecated the discussion of a question so disreputable to the Prince, and hazardous in its consequences to the nation. How far the gentlemen above mentioned are implicated in the guilt and profusion of Carleton House is needless to inquire. Their fun, I hope, is set for ever! and though I am

disposed to treat with silent contempt the suspicious, not to say perfidious absence of one of them from his duty in parliament, I cannot but admire the happy dexterity of the other, who, in paying court at the same time to his Royal Highness and the people, worshipped at once both God and Mammon! Instead of that eloquence which has so often cozened our judgment, and ravished our deluded senses, being exerted with all its force and ingenuity to rescue the treasury from premeditated rapine; instead of its being displayed in all its bewitching splendor to illumine, convert and captivate a shameless senate to a sense of honor and of duty. Instead of its majestic thunder, provoked by outrage, and aggravated by audacity, reverberating from one extremity of the empire to the other; instead of reprobating, as heretofore, with all the vehemence of a mind ardent in its pursuits, and in love with right, a wanton expenditure of the public money, or any addition to the aggravated burthens which oppress and discourage industry, we find its vigor, brilliancy, candor, and apparent rectitude, exchanged for insipidity, dulness, fallacy, and evasion, while the wretched effects of a vi-

cious education, confirmed by long habits, and which interest and ambition (under the deceitful veil of mock-patriotism) had for some time past concealed from vulgar observation, appeared in all their genuine baseness and deformity! Never did the House of Commons (accustomed and reconciled as it is to sophisms, tergiversations, contradictions and absurdities) hear a speech so little calculated to answer its delusive purposes; it was artful, but could not impose. Instead of giving hope or satisfaction to either party, it discouraged, offended, and disgusted both. It gave us the idea of Cunning outwitting herself by the nicety of refinement, and the only part which gentlemen were disposed to condemn the least, was that which recommended a mode less tedious for discharging the debts of the Prince of Wales, than that which was suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; the motive to which, perhaps, was compassion to the object of the debate, in order that the recollection of the insult and wrong offered to the nation might be the sooner effaced from its memory. Mr. Fox, insensible to the interests of those whose cause he would be thought to espouse, regardless of his solemn

and repeated promises to his constituents, forgetful at once of his character, his country and himself, descends to accelerate by subterfuge, trick, and collusion, what he affects to condemn !

He tells us in excuse for assenting to the proposed increase, that he was an advocate, when in office, for the enormous addition proposed to be made to an establishment which every dispassionate man, acquainted with the origin and true principles of government, will acknowledge to be a very competent, and even a very liberal provision for the eldest son of the chief magistrate. Mr. Fox, aware of the danger of being thought a partisan of the Prince, or of contending that the nation ought to pay his debts, enters into an historical detail of his own munificent intentions towards his Royal Highness, at those precise periods of his life, when he appears to have been the least entitled to the liberality of the country, and the least disposed to have made a proper use of it.

I am unwilling to suppose that he antedates his beneficent intentions towards the Prince, in order to avoid an investigation of what might ultimately affect his own credit, and at

all events degrade his Royal Highness still lower, if possible, in the public opinion; I should be sorry to question the veracity of a man, whose talents and attainments I have been accustomed from my infancy to admire; whose splendid abilities qualify him for the first offices in the state, and whose amiable and engaging manners, render his acquaintance a desirable acquisition; I would not have it thought that I assume a fact for the malevolent purpose of drawing conclusions unfavorable to his character, but allowing that his assent to the enormous establishment proposed by Mr. Pitt, was *not* an expedient to provide for this shameful accumulation of debt; admitting that his proposal to compel the Prince to live upon a reduced income until that debt was liquidated, was not an artifice to impose upon our credulity, and preserve to himself, if possible, all that remains of a popularity as laboriously acquired, as it appears to have been foolishly squandered, what does it prove, but that Mr. Fox, at variance with himself, and regardless of that œconomy which he recommends to those whom he has endeavoured to supplant, would

long since have plunged the nation into expences it can ill afford, and have saddled it with an establishment unnecessarily extravagant? To every objection that was made in the debate, and to a painful enumeration of facts, at once offensive and distressing, he gave no other answer than that it was requisite to support the splendor of the heir apparent. I do not like vague terms in argument, and especially when the subject requires precision. Mr. Fox is a man of observation and of reflection; and as his mind is naturally inquisitive and acute, it cannot have escaped his notice that example, in fashion and in morals, descend from the higher to the lower orders in society. Mr. Fox cannot have travelled thus far on his journey through life without having acquired a very competent knowledge of the reciprocal duties, and relative conditions of men living together in society; taking it then for granted, that his well-informed mind can receive no additional instruction on a subject which must have occupied a considerable share of his attention, I will ask him if he does not think that the splendor of princes is best supported, not by a piebald assemblage of useless valets, decorated with titles or with

liveries, but by the rectitude of their conduct, and the purity of their manners? I am sure that he must agree with me. Would to heaven that I could return the compliment, and subscribe with equal justice to *his* opinions. But he has objects in view far different to those of mine, or he would never have asked in the face of parliament and the world, “*If they would have the Prince of Wales set the first example of reform?*” The very question is an acknowledgment of either guilt or folly, or both, in his Royal Highness, and the fact admitted, I answer in the AFFIRMATIVE. This gentleman, in a speech which reflects more credit on his ingenuity, than on his patriotism, insinuates that the cities of London and Westminster, and even the nation at large should set an example of reform, and that until *they* shew a disposition in earnest to retrench their expensive habits, it is neither fair nor decent to expect temperance or œconomy in his Royal Highness! This is granting a long furlough indeed to folly and extravagance, and with which every block-head and knave in the kingdom will be delighted, but is it just? and can it be said to come with propriety from the lips of a man

who is a legislator? who has formerly filled one of the first departments in the state, and who (reduced to mendicity by the irregularities of a long protracted youth) is at this instant maintained by subscription! That Mr. Fox should have hazarded such sentiments, and have held such language, must be matter of astonishment to those who have heard him reason on other subjects, and his friends I am sure must lament, that he should have lost an opportunity so favorable to the recovery of his bankrupt reputation; they must have been hurt, that a man from whom better principles and better arguments are expected, should have offered an apology so extremely futile, and as profligate as it is weak, for the unpardonable excesses of Carleton House; they must have blushed at the humiliating and disgusting inequalities which appeared in a mind fitted for better purposes, while the miserable shifts to which Vice and Indiscretion were driven in attempting to conceal their deformities, gave virtue the triumph she deserves, and atoned in some degree for the indignity offered to morals and good sense. Does Mr. Fox speak of London in its corporate capacity, or as a town containing an in-

numerable crowd of inhabitants, who have a right to exact, or at least to expect, conformity to their modes, manners, and principles from their sovereign, and the male branches of his family, to whom only I have alluded, and in whom amendment is required? Never was an evasion so grossly impudent and palpable, presented to the common sense of mankind! Called upon in his public function to condemn, what in his private character he has countenanced and connived at, no wonder that the gentleman should appear awkward and ill at ease; his situation was distressing, and feeling for the wounded honor of the Prince, it was natural that he should feel for his own.

But awkward and ill at ease as he must necessarily have felt, distressed as he must have been by the vote he was called upon to give, and which, to whatever side it leant, would tend equally to his shame and conviction. I am astonished at his daring to inquire if *gentlemen would select his Royal Highness for the first example of reform, and, in some sort, for punishment?* (a) Yes! most undoubtedly his

(a) Vide the speech of Mr. Fox, as reported in the Morning Chronicle on Friday, May 15, 1795.

Royal Highness ought to be selected *for the first example of reform, and in some sort for punishment*, because he set a bad example when it was incumbent on him, as heir apparent, to have set a good one. It is a sorry and a contemptible excuse, unworthy of his pride and understanding, to say that the times are corrupt. They are indeed most lamentably so; but I will take upon me to assert, that however *bad* the morals of the country were when his Royal Highness descended from the nursery, that he has contributed to make them *worse*. The share he has had in relaxing those ligaments which unite and bind men together, and which are the easiest, and to a certainty the best securities for their mutual integrity towards each other, requires that his Royal Highness should be the first to set an example of reform; and if, by exercising the virtue of self-denial, Mr. Fox means *punishment*, I aver that every retrenchment the Prince shall think proper to make, will tend to restore to him that share in our affections which he has unhappily lost by misconduct. It will be an *amende honorable*; the only one in his power to make, and which he owes to the nation whose property he has

squandered, and whose morals he has insulted. To these considerations, which a life of thoughtless dissipation has rendered personally applicable to the Prince, may be added others not less obvious and important, and these are the obligations he is under from his elevated station, to set a good example to the nation, and to abstain from whatever tends to propagate vice and immorality. It was the duty of those with whom he associated in earlier life, to have informed him that the inferior orders of mankind take their morals and manners from their superiors, and that the example of the former never influence the conduct of the latter.

When the indecency of contracting debts in breach of a solemn promise was urged, when the nature and complexion of those debts, and the impertinence of calling upon the public to fulfil the engagements of vice and folly were commented upon, Mr. Fox observed a profound silence, there was nothing to revolt or shock his feelings in the turpitude that involved his Royal Highness in difficulties; there was nothing scandalous or offensive in the violation of *that* word which ought to be held as sacred as religion! neither could Mr.

Fox, watchful as a lynx over all the other disbursements of public money, discover either prodigality, mischief, or breach of trust to the nation, in voting a considerable portion of its property to discharge the debts of a man who must blush, if he has any shame, to the last moment of his existence at having contracted them. Mr. Fox gets rid of the complicated infamy of the business, by asserting that he was, when in office, for allowing his Royal Highness an annual income of one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds, but that he was over-ruled in the cabinet. What is this but a positive and direct confession, that his colleagues, more faithful to the nation than himself, were better guardians of the public money? What is it in fact, but acknowledging that Mr. Pitt, more frugal and æconomical, is the better minister? that he has saved to the country by his arrangement, something more than half a million; while Mr. Fox, if *his* counsels had been attended to, at a time when the heir apparent certainly *did not differ in political opinions from his Majesty's Ministers*, would have lavished upwards of seven hundred thousand pounds of the public money on a prodigal, whose pre-

sent embarrassments would not have been prevented, either by the servile complaisance of the minister, or the bounty of the nation? This saving, immense as it is, may however be the least part of the obligations which we owe to the colleagues of Mr. Fox in the first instance, and to the prudent management of Mr. Pitt in the second. Our obligations to both may go to an extent which sets calculation at defiance, if we seriously contemplate the mischiefs which might have resulted to the kingdom, if Carleton House, at the time of the Regency, had possessed the means of addressing itself more effectually to the venal and necessitous, who are known to vote on the same principle that the Swiss fight, and who are to be bought and sold like sheep in Smithfield market. If the partisans of the Prince should imprudently urge the discussion, which every friend to the constitution most sincerely wishes had never been agitated, it may not be useless to inquire how much of the present debt was contracted at that lamentable period, for the purpose of rewarding the mean and perfidious apostacy of those, who deserted their sovereign in the moment

of affliction. No doubt but both these descriptions of men have had a considerable portion of the spoil, and we know to a certainty, that the editor and proprietor of the Morning Post insisted on ample security, for the punctual payment of the money and annuity for which the paper was sold, before he would transfer his share in a prostitute print to his royal successor. I do not wish to bear hard upon the gentlemen whose counsels at that period are said to have influenced his Royal Highness. It is very probable that a too rigid scrutiny into the transactions of those days, would lead to a discovery not much to their honor; and apprehensive of this danger, they have preferred risking that credit with the nation to which they aspire; to an exposure of facts which would prove how very much their *principles* and their *professions* are at variance; that having had a share in the dissipations of the Prince, it is incumbent on them to extricate his Royal Highness from difficulties in which they have contributed to involve him, and that, accomplices in the guilt and folly which have excited a ferment throughout the nation, they are bound to vote for the discharge of a debt, every item of which is a dis-

grace to the moral character of the man who contracted it. Admitting these facts, for I am not inclined to dispute them, and allowing that for the sake of consistency, blended perhaps with a wish to partake again of the festivities at Carleton House, they cannot abandon the Prince in his greatest need, I have only to hope that neither of them in future will have the impertinence to prate of their patriotism and public virtue, or to claim the confidence of the people, whose credulity they have abused, and whose interests they seem willing to sacrifice.



THE
PUBLISHER

TO THE
READER.

London, May 14, 1795.

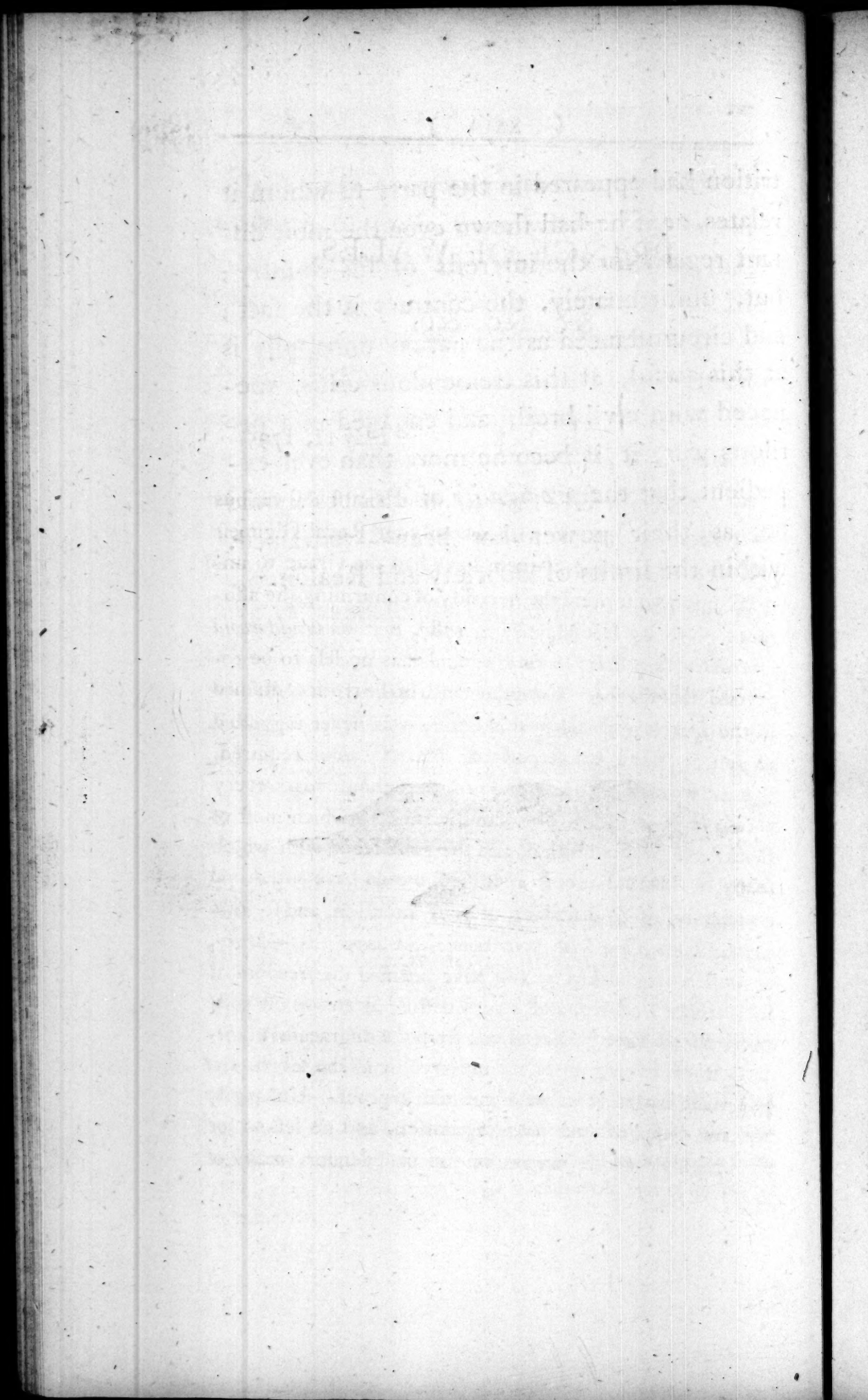
THE following pages were sent by the post to the publisher, accompanied by a request that he would instantly get them printed. On receiving this requisition, he resolved to relinquish the design he had formed of reprinting some letters addressed to the Prince of Wales in 1784, under the signature of Neptune, and which were at that time extremely popular; but finding, on a re-perusal, that they contained matter well worthy of the attention of his Royal Highness, and which (by omitting some circumstances applicable to the politics of the day) might be acceptable to those, who estimate the importance of Princes, not by their titles, but their virtues; and who reverence men for their good qualities, rather than for their rank or good fortune; the publisher has, in some degree, pursued his original plan, by annexing the letters in question, (reduced into one) to the following address,

with a view to rescue the country from the extortion of those from whom better conduct is expected, and whose example must have a very considerable influence on the morals and manners of the nation. If the Prince of Wales should take offence at the exposure of what has long ceased to be classed among the *indiscretions* of youth; it is neither to the Author nor to the Publisher of this Address, that his Royal Highness should direct his anger, but to HIMSELF, and to those who have so scandalously misled him. He has repeatedly been admonished, in public and in private, of the sad and disgraceful consequences which would inevitably result from a life of riot and dissipation. Nor was the respect due to his own exalted character omitted, when he was apprised of the obligations which he owes to the country at large. The Letter signed Legion, annexed to that of Neptune, records a transaction (*a*) which, disreputable as it is, would most probably have been effaced from our memory, if any thing like reform or con-

(*a*) The Duke of Bedford, who is said to have suffered by a collusion of the basest description between the *master* and *man*, complained at the time, in very unequivocal terms, of the fraud that *jockeyed* his Grace out of a considerable sum of money at Newmarket.

trition had appeared in the party to whom it relates, or if he had shewn even the most distant regard for the interests of his country; but, unfortunately, the contrary is the fact; and circumstanced as the nation unhappily is at this awful, at this tremendous crisis, menaced with civil broil, and engaged in a perilous war, it is become more than ever expedient that the *prodigality* of Princes should be, as their power has been---restrained, within the limits of Sobriety and Reason.





TO THE
PRINCE OF WALES,

&c. &c. &c.

May 11, 1795.

SIR,

IT is sincerely to be lamented, that amidst the various descriptions of people with whom your Royal Highness has associated, none of them have had the virtue to impress upon your mind the necessity of confirming the assurance given by His Majesty in 1787, that *you would avoid contracting any debts in future*; and it is no less to be regretted, that the force and importance of the truth contained in the speech prefixed to this letter, was never suggested to you, by those whose personal interests alone required, that the strictest rectitude and propriety should mark every action of your life. The familiarities to which most of them have been admitted, and the confidence with which many of them have been indulged, would have authorised an admonition so deserving of your attention, and so intimately connected with your honor and happiness.—Duty, as well as friendship, would have justified the freedom of such salutary advice, and a very trifling attention on your part, would have preserved you from the disgraceful humiliation of having publicly received it in the severe and poignant language of well merited reproof. Unhappily for the credit of your own reputation, and no less so for the country which maintains you in splendor, many of

whom it was your misfortune to select for companions, imagined they had an interest in deceiving you; while others, vain, abject and profligate, courted your favor by flattering your follies, and administering to your irregularities! I will venture to assert, Sir, that there is only *one* opinion throughout the British Empire, not only with respect to the general tenor of your conduct and the injustice of the claim, which has been injudiciously, not to say indecently made, on the abused generosity of the nation; but with regard to the *principles* and *sentiments* from which *that* conduct has unfortunately resulted.—This opinion, Sir, however it may offend you, has been publicly announced to the world, not through the questionable medium of our public prints; not by the idle and loose conversations of interested individuals, influenced by private pique; nor by the disaffected few, who, enemies to Royalty, behold with malignant joy those improvident actions of yourself and family, which have a direct tendency to bring Monarchy into hazard and contempt, and from which more danger to our civil establishments is to be apprehended, than from all the inflammatory writings of all the incendiaries with which the French revolution has deluged Europe, *but*—

BY THE COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED! It is the British House of Commons, Sir, (the most valuable and most important branch of *our* legislature) that, by unanimously hesitating (without a full attendance of its Members) to discharge debts, for which it is almost to be wished you were personally responsible, has tacitly acknowledged you are unworthy of the farther liberality of your country. If the call of the House so judiciously insisted upon by Colonel Stanley, and so prudently acceded to by the Minister, should be considered as a personal dis-

respect; if your pride should be offended at the check it has happily received from the demur to a request, at once unreasonable and ill-timed, it may be proper to inquire what right you had to expect a compliance, after a conduct so indiscreet (to speak with extreme tenderness of it,) and which has been so obviously incompatible with every obligation that you owe to yourself and the nation? If you imagine, Sir, that the accident of your birth conferred on you the right to squander, in every species of licentious dissipation, the revenues of the country; if you think yourself entitled, from your exalted rank, to levy contributions on our wealth and industry, and to render Parliament the mean and servile instrument of your exactions, it is full time that your Royal Highness should be undeceived with respect to the equity of your pretensions, and the extent of your power. It is full time that you should know how very much your fortune and your happiness depend upon a correct and temperate conduct, and that it was owing to the scandalous waste, profligacy and profusion of the Court of Versailles, and of its worthless Princes, that the former has been deservedly annihilated, and the latter become despicable, and degraded mendicants; harrassed and driven from state to state, penniless, friendless, and despised, without the most distant prospect of ever regaining either a comfortable or a permanent establishment. A very few years are elapsed since these men lived in a style of splendor and magnificence, unknown to the more temperate manners of this country. Every knee became flexible at their approach, and the ready homage they received from millions, was more the spontaneous tribute of generous affection, than the servile adulation of an enslaved multitude: contrast their former glory, with their present forlorn and wretched condition! Examine the history of their profligacy.

gate, spendthrift lives, and tremble at the consequences ! Behold their persons proscribed by common consent, through the vast extent of territory in which they were once idolized; their claims to distinction treated with laughter and derision; their affluence exchanged for beggary; the acclamations of joy with which they were every where saluted, converted into the most poignant reproaches; and their birth titles, and rank, treated with mockery and contempt: which ever way they turn, disgrace and infamy stare them in the face! they have not even the miserable consolation of being pitied, and if any thing can possibly add to the accumulated calamities, under which these wretched outcasts wander from place to place, it is that the better part of mankind approves of the punishment they have received for their aggravated guilt, folly and depravity. Their history, Sir, should serve as a MIRROR to Kings and Princes: *These* may behold in the conduct of the former, the destiny they may expect by following so ruinous an example. It is from the adversities of others, as well as from our own, that the most instructive lessons for our conduct in life are derived; and whatever tends to convince mankind of the *instability* of fortune, deserves their most serious attention. The sad reverse which the French Princes have experienced, ought not to be an unprofitable lesson to your Royal Highness; and forgive me, Sir, if I add, that the people, on whom you have so unreasonably called a *second* time to discharge engagements, which duty, as well as honor and gratitude, forbade you to contract, have an interest much greater than you suspect, that the example of France should be a warning to you and your family—Is it not reproach, I will not say to your justice, but to your prudence, that you should again call on the bounty of the nation to administer to your extravagance, in the very midst of an arduous and perilous war, avowedly undertaken to secure that Con-

stitution, on the preservation of which you are dependent for food and raiment? Is it not as lamentable as it is unaccountable, that with the very terrible example before you in a neighbouring nation, you should have pertinaciously, nay criminally, adhered to the same system of disorderly and unjustifiable expence, which contributed to shake, and finally to subvert the Throne of Louis XVIth? Is it decent; nay, Sir, is it HONEST in you to expect, for the mere gratification of your vanity, that any addition should be made to the accumulated burdens of this country, at the very instant that the genius of finance, exhausted and dispirited, is compelled to accept of private donations from corporate bodies, and even from individuals of all ranks, to carry on a contest, the great object of which is to preserve you and your family from ruin? Is it not a reproach to your feelings, Sir, that you are soliciting an enormous sum from Parliament, amounting to near a million, to discharge debts wantonly contracted, and for which not even the shadow of an excuse can be urged; while every nobleman and gentleman in the British dominions, while tradesmen, mechanics, and manufacturers, while even the laborious poor have relinquished a portion of their scanty pittance, and all of them have generously contributed to the very extent of their means, to the defence of their country?

Will it, can it be believed by posterity, that while all ranks and descriptions of men, vying with each other in a laudable zeal for the common cause, sacrificed the comforts of life, and a part of their property; while munificent subscriptions were cheerfully opened in every county, town, village, and hamlet in the kingdom, to enable the Minister to prosecute the war with vigour and effect, or to alleviate the calamities of those who became victims to it; that the Royal Family of England *alone*, should have remained insensible to the calls of humanity and of patriotism, and that

one of them in particular, uninfluenced by so many animating examples of public virtue, should require a portion of the money, raised for the exigencies of the State, to be appropriated, (not for the fair and honest purposes of his dignified establishment, but) to discharge a variety of engagements which he dares not reveal, and which Parliament is bound in justice and in policy to resist? Is it not strange, Sir, that your name does not appear in any one of the public subscriptions, to which the perilous conflict in which we are involved, or the unexampled distress of the times has given birth? We are told, that the laudable institution for the relief of the widows and children of our gallant seamen and soldiers is under your patronage, as if a charity of that nature and extent stood in need of any patronage but that of the public! There is indeed to every advertisement that appears from the society, a vain and servile display of your name, unworthy of the committee and of the gentleman who proposed the institution, while the barren privilege of affixing a name no longer respectable, is the sum total of your contribution! Surely, Sir, you must strangely have misconceived your relative situation with the people, as well as the generally received maxims of right and expediency, or you would never have come forward with a claim, as imprudent, as it is hazardous and unjust, and which, with all the circumstances annexed to it, looks as if you considered the wealth and industry of the nation as your property, and that we held the honest fruits of our labour, or the more ample possessions of inheritance, not in fee, but as *stewards in trust* for your sole profit and use. It is time, Sir, that you should be recalled from the errors of your education, and of bad habits; it is time that you should be awakened from the delusion, in which it is impossible you can continue, without inevitable ruin to yourself and mischief to the nation; every individual is interested in the success of this

forcible appeal to your rectitude and discretion, and if you are wise, you will prove by the regularity of your future conduct, that the appeal has been made to a man *worthy* of the situation into which the accident of birth has thrown him—In May 1787, a message from the King was delivered to Parliament, on the subject of your debts, amounting to ONE HUNDRED and NINETY-THREE THOUSANDS, SIX HUNDRED and FORTY EIGHT POUNDS. The sum was considered as enormous, and the people as little satisfied with the part you had taken in politics as with your transactions in private life, expressed their disapprobation of your conduct in terms, which would have suggested to any well constructed mind, the inestimable value of reputation. Your youth and inexperience were however urged in your behalf, and the unsuspecting generosity attached to the British character induced the legislature to confide in the solemn assurance given by Majesty itself, *that your Royal Highness would avoid contracting any debts in future.* The sum of ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY ONE THOUSAND POUNDS were voted, which, with the retrenchments *promised* and *expected*, was thought would effectually release you from your present, and preserve you from all future embarrassments.—I shall not be reproached, Sir, with presumption, when I assert that no authority, however respectable should operate against *matter of fact*. I will even go farther, and maintain, that it ceases to be respectable the instant it endeavours to evade truth or to promote falsehood.

Your Royal Father, in 1787, stood pledged to the nation (of whose loyalty, affection, and liberality he has received abundant proofs) that you would not again trespass on its bounty; yet in April 1795—in less than eight years, His Majesty (in violation of his royal word,) comes

forward with a piteous tale of woe, and solicits the country (labouring under the pressure of accumulated burdens, and engaged in a contest of the most serious nature) for a sum very little short of a million, to discharge a fresh catalogue of debts which, it was promised, *should never be contracted!*

I pass over the *pretended* sale of horses, at the former epoch, and a variety of other indecent practices, which announced as little *delicacy* as *integrity*, in those who *counselled* such mean and dishonorable expedients. I have not the least objection, that the scandalous histories attached to Newmarket, and all the little contrivances to abuse the credulous simplicity of the Nation, should be buried in oblivion. The times have most woefully demonstrated, that *Princes* as well as *Plebeians*, may stand in need of an *act of Grace*, and my justice is not of that inexorable nature, as to insist on the full measure of punishment, even to the greatest delinquents.—*This act of Grace*, you have received, and I am willing to allow, that your claim to an indulgence most shamefully abused, was very admissible at the time. Yet with every disposition to pass over the transactions of that period, I cannot excuse your subsequent conduct.—I believe, that if better maxims had been instilled into you, by those who had the charge of your education, or if you had been taught in later life, to form a just estimate of the obligations you owe to society, that there would have been no occasion for this address, or for those severe, but necessary animadversions in parliament, which have offended your pride. But your having been *ill-advised* by some men, and *misled* by others, can never justify the demand which has been made on this country for the enormous sum of SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS, and which I am afraid (considerable as it is) will scarce pay Ten Shillings in the Pound, on the sum total of your debts! I am really

incompetent to guess, what arguments, even the minister, with his splendid talents, can urge in excuse for a demand which in times less profligate and corrupt, would be called *flagitious*; his situation is embarrassing—The dilemma to which he is reduced by the ruthless junction of prodigality and rapacity is certainly distressing, and even your Royal Highness may venture to feel for his perplexities, without being suspected of affection or respect for the man.—It was impossible that Mr. Pitt, could refuse to deliver the message respecting your debts, (unjust and ill-timed as it was) without a direct breach with his Sovereign, and the hazard of exposing the Country at a very critical period, to the danger of *another* inter-regnum! while on the other hand, by complying with the commands of his Majesty, he was certain of obtaining a portion of that odium which belongs almost exclusively to yourself. I think too favorably of your temper and disposition, Sir, to suppose that you can receive any gratification from the very awkward predicament in which you have contrived to place the man who incurred your displeasure some years since, by resisting a claim, the admission of which would have endangered the empire; but if your Royal Highness should bear in vindictive remembrance, the opposition you met with at that time from his firmness and fidelity; if you should harbour any resentment in your mind, for his manly and dignified conduct in the affair of the Regency, your revenge must have been amply gratified, by the ungracious task which has been imposed on him, of applying to Parliament on your behalf for money to discharge improvident debts, and Jew bargains, at the very instant he could not obtain sufficient for the defence of the empire, without adding very considerably to the innumerable taxes, by which the Nation is most oppressively and shamefully burthened?—Mr. Pitt may have acted prudently, in hazarding his fame and popularity,

in preference to the risk of leaving the country a *second time* without a government—The concession may have averted a calamity of much greater extent than subscribing to, or in other words, encouraging your excesses; but if he has pledged himself to support the unpalatable measure in parliament, with all the credit, influence, and authority of office, he has done more than he ought to have done, and no longer deserves to be the minister of this country.

—It must be matter of sincere affliction, Sir, to every man who has a just estimate of the excellence of the British Constitution, and whose loyalty to your family is neither servile nor assumed, but rational and unaffected, that the King should have been so ill-advised as to apply to parliament to relieve you a *second time* from pecuniary difficulties, after a positive assurance in 1787, that “*he would not have desired or expected the assistance of the House of Commons, but on a well-grounded expectation that your Royal Highness would avoid contracting any debts in future.*” This declaration, Sir, ill accords with the message delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 27th of last month, and which, from the *manner* it was received, and the *comments* it excited, must have produced very unpleasant sensations in his Majesty’s breast; who, in giving way to a tenderness *ill-bestowed*, has made it a question with a very considerable part of the community, whether *he* has shewn that attention to the embarrassed situation of the country, which the people have a RIGHT to expect from their sovereign? I do not wish to add to the poignancy of his feelings on an occasion so distressing, but the measure was certainly injudicious, if not hazardous, that brought on a discussion from which no credit could possibly result to *your* character, and which *policy* should have compelled you to avoid, (at a moment like the present) when the very onerous establishment of Monarchy is invi-

diously contrasted with the moderate expences of a Government less complicated and splendid. It is possible, that this indiscreet anxiety in his Majesty to extricate you from difficulties, resulting from riot and extravagance, may diminish that love and veneration, which a loyal and generous nation has hitherto demonstrated for your family; nor can it be attributed to caprice or disaffection, if the marked, and scandalous indifference which a life of dissipation evinces for the miseries of mankind, should weaken that respect for your Royal Highness, which you have been taught to consider as a *tribute* due to your birth. Is it not a reproach to your justice, as well as to your prudence, Sir, (for you are no longer an infant, neither can you plead ignorance or inexperience in excuse for your excesses) that your debts, amounting to ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY THREE THOUSAND, SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY EIGHT POUNDS (*a*) in the year 1787, and for the *discharging* of which you received that sum from the ill-requited bounty of the nation, should have grown, in the short period of eight years, to the monstrous and unpardonable size of a MILLION?

Is it not an impeachment at once of your gratitude and understanding, Sir, to expect that the people who so cheerfully contributed to your support, and who have already subscribed most liberally to your ease, splendor, and independence, should lay themselves under additional imposts because you have been imprudent, or *something worse*?

Is it not a reproach to your feelings, Sir, that while the middle and lower orders of society can with difficulty obtain the common necessaries of life; while the aggregate taxes which every individual pays to the exigencies of the State,

(*a*) Vide the Annual Register, 1787, page 130, for the item of the first debt. The items of the second it is thought will never appear.

amount to, at least, seventeen shillings in the pound, and that while the laborious poor (*a*), snarling under the severe

a The miserable peasant, destitute of every resource but industry, to support his wretched offspring, and even that resource (poor and scanty as it is) a contingency on his health and capacity for labor, must toil hard for the solitary shilling with which he daily feeds and clothes his helpless family. It has repeatedly fallen within my observation, since the commencement of this letter, to behold in a variety of instances, this extreme distress aggravated by the illness or infirmity, of the children to whom, as well as to their hapless parents, existence appears to be every thing but a blessing. Contrast their deplorable condition with your own exalted state! Recollect how much you are indebted to *chance* for the superiority of your fortune; and remembering that these men are your fellow-creatures; possessing, in common with yourself, a right to the common necessities and enjoyments of life, let me ask you, Sir, if you can without blushing demand, exclusive of the very ample income allowed you by the nation, a sum that would comfortably maintain, in perpetuity, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED of these very people whose afflictions you would increase, and whose morsel of bread you would embitter and render more difficult to obtain, in order to defray your extravagance? Sir, it is against reason; it is against justice, humanity, and right; it is against your personal interest and security, that a disproportion so scandalous and unnatural should exist between MAN and MAN! God never designed it; and the Government that authorises or connives at the abuse, hazards its tranquillity or existence. It is no abatement of the sufferings and agonising sorrows of the famished cottager, that the portion of happiness is no more diffused among the higher than it is among the lower orders of society. It is no alleviation of his distress that while he is perishing of hunger, your Royal Highness is exposed to numberless vexations and disappointments. The chagrin and anger, provoked by pride, deservedly mortified, or your ill-health, arising from intemperance, afford him no consolation in the hour of calamity; they administer no comfort to his mind, and afford no drawback to his grief or misfortunes.

They furnish neither food nor raiment to his starving, ragged offspring, nor shield his ill thatched hovel from the rude blasts of winter. It is sophistry to say that the magnificence in which you live is but a splendid misery, which amply revenges him for the difference of his fortune; nor is it argument to say, that because you are wretched, he ought to be happy, for it is only a base and vindictive mind that can derive consolation or joy from the miseries of another!

pressure of hunger, have been forced, in order to prolong a wretched existence, into insurrections of a very serious and alarming nature; that you, insensible to their deplorable condition, and to the accumulated calamities which mark the present time, should come to Parliament, and require those burdens to be increased, and those calamities to be augmented without producing any one voucher that could justify Parliament to the nation for so lavish a grant of the public money? Will your Royal Highness reveal the disgraceful items which have swelled your present debt to a sum, which renders your application for its payment as preposterous, as it is indecent and inconsiderate? I am sure you will not, and for the best of all possible reasons, because

YOU DARE NOT!

I will not inquire, whether the money advanced in 1787, was faithfully applied to the ostensible purposes for which it was asked and granted. Neither will I inquire, whether those æconomical arrangements took place, for which you stood pledged to Parliament and your country. Nor is it necessary; the message delivered to the House of Commons on the 27th of last month is a sufficient answer to every question of the kind; it is a direct and evident violation of the contract, in its most *essential* part, and enables

Would you wish, Sir, to have your demand prefaced by the causes that produced it? Would you hazard a proclamation that should announce to the MILLION who subscribe to your maintenance, that the splendid allowance of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS a year is inadequate to your support, and that the sum (ample as it is) must be doubled? I do not think, Sir, that you would consent to any such statement. Yet, whether you decline it from modesty or from fear, the injustice and indecency of taking so much money from the acquired wealth of the country, will not be less enormous; and you will do well to abandon what you cannot demand as a right, and which the most servile of your dependants will not venture to assert you are entitled to receive as a favor.

us to ascertain, with almost mathematical precision, the fidelity with which *the other conditions of the bond* have been fulfilled; but though I am willing to spare you the mortification which detected fallacy must ever feel, whether it is found in a cottage or a palace; although I forbear, from motives of affection and loyalty to your family, to enter into a scrutiny which certainly would not tend to inspire the people with a love of royalty; I feel no difficulty in asserting that, considering all the circumstances attending your present incumbrances, the *mode* in which, and the *purposes for which* they were contracted, with the positive assurance from Majesty itself, that no future claim of the kind should ever be brought forward, that the House of Commons cannot vote for the payment of your debts without being guilty of a breach of trust, and forfeiting the confidence of the nation !

THE LETTERS OF NEPTUNE

TO THE

PRINCE OF WALES.

SIR,

JULY, 1784.

While your irregularities were confined within the circle of juvenile indiscretions, and your conduct could be accounted for in the natural progress of the passions, your excesses, numerous as they have been, excited indeed our wonder, but never provoked our indignation. We beheld you emerge from the nursery with even paternal affection; every heart was devoted to your interest; and it was neither difficult nor unworthy of you to have preserved those prejudices which had been generously formed in your favor. The intemperance of your youth gave no offence; and in the commencement of your career, it was never once suspected that we should have occasion to execrate the object whom we adored.

Such, Sir, were the advantages under which you entered into society; and give me leave to inform you, that you must have been extremely indefatigable to have effaced so effectually those favorable impressions, and to have changed the current of opinion against you in so short a time.

To your imprudent choice of friends may be attributed your present painful situation.

It was your misfortune to select those for your companions, who, having neither fortune nor character to lose, were ready to conduct you into all the extravagancies of the

meanest and most dangerous debaucheries. Their profligacy rendered them the willing panders to your pleasures, while their poverty involved you in their profusion and necessities. The nation feels the consequences of these complicated evils, and beholds with equal astonishment and indignation, a progress uncommonly rapid from bad to worse, and which may eventually terminate in serious mischief to yourself and your country.—It must have been no less mortifying to your royal father than disgraceful to yourself, that the first public act of your life was distinguished by an indecent opposition to the measures of his Government, and the constitutional rights of his crown; it would be difficult to account for the motives of so decided and so extraordinary a conduct, if the party with whom you have condescended to associate, had not revealed the conditions of your contract. The engagements on your part have been executed with the most active and pointed fidelity, with a firmness, which has triumphed over every obligation of filial duty and respect, and rendered you insensible to the general interests of your fellow citizens. I will pass over the moral turpitude of irritating a son against a father: the infamy of the action will decidedly fall on the incendiaries, but the sad consequences resulting from a conduct so atrocious, may ultimately affect the peace and prosperity of the nation, that has a claim on your gratitude in return for the splendor and liberality with which it supports you.

To those who have abused your simplicity and inexperience, I have little to say: long habits have rendered them incorrigible, and admonitions become useless, where there is neither shame nor sentiment to give them force. Is it possible, Sir, that those who have had the important charge of your education, could have concealed from your knowledge the forms and spirit of the constitution?

It is necessary to inform you, that before the man to whom you look up, can perform his promise, two events not very likely to happen must positively take place? The first must be restored to power in the first instance—and in the second, the NATION must consent to the increase of income with which you have been flattered and deluded.

The public, Sir, are under no obligation to discharge those debts, which your profusion has created; nor is it very probable that, considering the deplorable state of their finances, they will be easily prevailed upon to enlarge an income, already sufficient for all the honest purposes of your present establishment.

These circumstances, perhaps, have been artfully concealed from you, as well as the impoverished state of the kingdom, which will not admit of a wanton and unnecessary expenditure of the public money. The war with America, ruinous in every respect, idly began and more idly conducted, has oppressed the people with innumerable taxes, and rendered them almost incapable of sustaining any additional burthens. Yet, the author of this unfortunate and disgraceful war, whom you have every reason to execrate, is honored with your confidence, and destitute of pride and integrity, we find him content to act a servile and subordinate part to the man, who has repeatedly menaced him with impeachment and the block! The calamities occasioned by the weak and corrupt administration of his Lordship, will terminate only with the empire; they will be felt to the latest period of our political existence. The millions squandered in obtaining majorities in both Houses of Parliament, will render a system of the strictest œconomy indispensable: and these truths, too obvious to be unknown to you, should at least have taught you to restrain your extravagance.

The plea of youth affords you no excuse. You stand in a different predicament from that of a private gentleman. His person and property are answerable for the debts he contracts; bankruptcy and a prison terminate his career, and the nation feels no inconvenience from his follies—but you, Sir, have *no property*; your annual income is an annual donation which may be withdrawn or withheld, and whatever your wretched associates may assert to the contrary, the PEOPLE OF ENGLAND will never submit to recompense those who injure and insult them!

It is a maxim, Sir, universally admitted, that the people should have but *one* opinion of their Sovereign; and this maxim holds equally good when applied to the presumptive Heir to the Crown.—It would be an idle waste of time to explain to you what that opinion ought to be. Those, to whom your education has been confided, cannot possibly have permitted you to advance to maturity in utter ignorance of so important a truth.

It is impossible, Sir, that you can be unacquainted with the public opinion respecting your conduct! You have learned in it the well founded, though intemperate, resentment of the people, whose honest indignation, provoked by your complicated offences, have forced them to violate the limits of respect and decency, and hurl their sentiments in your very face.—I know that you have been taught to despise the public opinion, and that the unremitting endeavours of your little Pandemonium have been exerted to inspire you with a contempt for popular applause. Adopt the idea, and your future life will be miserable—be assured, Sir, that popularity is the best security for a Prince; it is not so fluctuating as you have been told. Private individuals have found it precarious, because it has been generously advanced to them on the credit of professions which they never intended to realise, and they have sunk

into obscurity on their impostures being discovered. But this is justice, not caprice.—Professions of patriotism are unnecessary where the power exists of carrying them into immediate execution. Our opinion of you will ever be regulated by your conduct. Deserve well, and you will never have occasion to reproach the multitude with inconstancy, or want of affection. Unhappily, Sir, the bias of your education has given way to bad example.

To fall into the hands of pimps, gamblers, and prostitutes, is among the common accidents to which every young man is exposed on his entering into society, and may be easily corrected: but you, Sir, disdaining the progressive stages to dishonor, started from the nursery into public life the very prop and hero of faction, and attached yourself to men of ruined fortunes and characters, who, under the sanction of your countenance, have attempted to annihilate at once the prerogative of the Crown and the rights of their fellow citizens.

You have, however, had the mortification to find that the credit of your name could not avail them. They have been driven from power with every mark of ignominy, and experience must have convinced you, that it was impossible to be connected with them without partaking of their infamy.

To war against experience is to give defeat the preference to conquest, and to hold honor and happiness at defiance. Believe me, Sir, the people are not to be awed by the splendor of your rank into an approbation of your errors, much less will they be disposed to support them, and you will do well to remember, that it is among the most common maxims of prudence, to avoid those contests, in which much may be lost and nothing can be gained.

If the various excesses into which you have plunged, with a precipitancy unexampled in the annals of this country, have involved you in pecuniary difficulties, you have no right to call upon the nation to extricate you.

I am very far from wishing you to be confined within the scanty limits of a penurious income, I would have it fully equal to your exalted birth and expectations; but in fixing your establishment, an attention must be paid to the finances of the nation. The former must ever depend upon the latter, and it may perhaps be matter of information to you, that every new tax, under our enormous load of debt, is an advance towards a revolution.

This is a serious and an alarming truth, which should awaken you to a sense of œconomy, for the sake of yourself and family, should you have no regard for the empire to which you have an hereditary claim.

The political relation which you have to the Constitution, gives the meanest of your fellow citizens an interest in your conduct. The fate of millions is involved in that of yours, and the danger to be apprehended from your conduct and long-established habits, is sufficient to alarm even confidence itself. Unhappily, Sir, the people, anxious to avert the mischiefs with which they are threatened have in vain endeavoured to shame you out of riot and bad company, to recal you to a sense of your dignity, and to the consideration of those tenures, by which the imperial diadem of Britain is held.

You cannot be uninformed that, the violation of them cost one Monarch his life, and another his Crown; but it may not be amiss to remind you that you are liable to the same penalties.

When you imprudently embarked in the service of opposition, it did not occur to you, perhaps, that it ought to be

an invariable maxim with every branch of the Royal Family to observe the strictest neutrality towards the various factions which are perpetually contending for an ascendancy in the Government; but since your fatal and disgraceful alliance with men of the worst and most profligate characters in the kingdom, it has been the principal object of their attention, to seduce you from the consideration of a truth, no less obvious than important, by plunging you into all the excesses of expensive, riot and dissipation, as if it had been their fixed determination that your ruin should precede that of the empire.

Your intimacies, no less mean than dishonorable with such men, have not only excited an alarm among all ranks of people at home, but become the table talk at every tavern and coffee-house on the continent, where you are more censured for your want of pride than for your want of prudence; and while foreigners behold with scorn and astonishment the heir of Britain degrading himself below even the meanest of his worthless companions, your fellow citizens lament, with the most affectionate concern, your obstinate attachment to men who have neither talents, integrity, nor manners.

A momentary reflection would be sufficient to awaken you to a sense of your situation: but your associates, aware of the danger of leaving you to yourself, have artfully contrived to keep you in the worst of dissipations, lest a lucid interval of good sense should restore you from the delirium of pleasure to the exercise of your understanding.

They are conscious that they must finish whenever you have the virtue to resume yourself, and they do well to keep you in profound ignorance of the dangers which surround you.

In the black catalogue of their aggravated guilt, the

infamy of playing off the son against the father is not the least criminal and ingenious—it is perfectly consistent with their principles, and favorable to their designs, to render the former a dupe to their artifices and the latter a cypher in his dominions; but as millions are involved in your fate, it is impossible but the clamours of the multitude will force their way through the sturdy and beggarly phalanx with which you have guarded Carleton House, and counsel you to acknowledge a truth, which filial duty, independent of every political obligation, ought to have suggested to you.

Recollect, Sir, the history of the two men who would arrogate to themselves the first offices of the state, and tremble for the consequences of your extraordinary partiality. Recollect that one of them, in time of profound peace, excited a civil war in the distant provinces, by reviving a claim, which had been abandoned as impracticable eight years before. The colonists, standing on the adamantine pillars of the Constitution, asserted that taxation and representation were inseparable. A negative was founded from the shores of America as from the voice of Jove, nor has the thunder of the British arms been able to cancel the irrevocable fiat of truth and justice. Fleets and armies were transported, at an enormous expence, to recover by violence what had been lost by folly; but as the war was as ill-conducted as it was wantonly begun, the events of the contest were the absolute loss of America, a ruinous war with three great maritime powers of Europe, a diminution of commerce, revenue, and dominion, and an increase of taxes, which puzzles the ingenuity of finance to raise ever sufficient to pay the interest of the money voted for the support of Government.

Is it to this wretched politician, who has deprived his

country of an extent of territory equal to half of Europe, that you wish to give your confidence? Is this blusterer in politics, whose capacity and views extended no farther than the management of his mercenaries, and who vainly thought that if he could triumph in Parliament he could triumph every where else—Is this great luminary, whom we now see fallen from his sphere, and moving as one of the satellites in the circle of an inferior planet, that once performed a subordinate course round his bright orb, to be again called forth into public life, that he may complete the ruin which he began?

Is it this great minister, degraded into a mean and servile dependance on the very man who menaced him with the block, in the zenith of his power, for the complicated crimes of venality, treachery, and corruption, that is to work out political salvation?—Shame upon such folly!

Is it to such a man, Sir, that you are so anxious to confide the safety of the nation? Impossible! Were you to pronounce it in my presence, I should question the fidelity of my ears. Is it from a junction so unnatural that the most valuable appendage of the British Empire is to be preserved from following the ruinous example of America? or can you seriously believe that a pyebald ministry, composed of odds and ends and men of straw, can possibly restore this country to her former splendor? You may reckon to eternity, Sir, but all the cyphers in the universe will never make an unit.

America torn from us by the very root; Ireland on the eve of revolt, and Scotland beating the loud drum of discontent, from the Tweed to the barren Orkneys, exhibit a very gloomy and humiliating prospect; while a faction in the center of the kingdom, under the sanction of your authority, is indefatigably employed in bringing their Sovereign and the measures of his Government into disrepute? Are you to

be informed, at this period, that your very existence depends upon that of the Empire? Our acres will remain to us through every change that can possibly happen: we have only to transfer our allegiance; but a revolution consigns you to beggary and to exile. In such a moment of calamity you will not only find yourself without property, but without friends; and the vermin who, at present, bask in the sunshine of your favor, will be the first to abandon you to the rigor of your fate.

Let us however, hope that an event so melancholy to the kingdom and ruinous to yourself, will be prevented by a timely attention to the obligations, which you owe to your country, and your family.

Consider what you have at stake, and banish from your confidence and society, a set of men whose pernicious councils and profligate manners have done equal injury to the power and the morals of the nation.

NEPTUNE.



TO THE
EDITOR
OF THE
WORLD.

SIR,

Dec. 1791.

I AM as little disposed to think *ill* of a YOUNG MAN, whose interest it certainly is, that all the world should think *well* of him, as the most intimate of his bottle companions: but my opinion of him must be regulated by his *conduct*, and not by the partial or venal reports of interested individuals, to all of which, every action of his life gives a direct and positive contradiction. A recent transaction, which shrinks from investigation, and puts even impudence to the blush, has brought him forward to public notice, from the back ground into which the most wanton profusion had driven him, and that under circumstances so humiliating and disgraceful, as to extinguish every hope that compassion for his youth, and respect for his family, have hitherto entertained from the combined efforts of time and experience.

A variety of reports, on which a variety of conjectures have been formed, and a variety of random assertions made, have, for some time past, engrossed the general attention,

and furnished matter for severe animadversion among all ranks and descriptions of people: but various as these reports have unavoidably been, from the circumstance that gave rise to them, being known only to a CHOSEN few, the person whose reputation only they affected, and which only could be affected by them, was the focus in which their pestilential and destructive rays finally centered. It was he ALONE who absorbed the guilt and infamy of the transaction; he alone sustains the odium; for his situation in life deprives him of the poor and sorry consolation of an associate in the crime laid to his charge. Were there ever a thousand accessaries. HE would eclipse them all—He alone would be considered as the principal, and stand alone exposed to public censure and derision!—for who, among the most necessitous and profligate of his *pretended* friends, would have presumed to suggest so foul and so iniquitous an expedient; and he that gave the advice, will he have the effrontery to avow it?

I am positive that he will not, though it were to screen the deluded youth from reproach and ignominy. The fraud was no sooner committed, than it blazed forth, in all its turpitude; Vice felt herself honoured by the audacity, as well as by the atrociousness of the trick, and gloried in what has been matter of profound grief and astonishment to every virtuous mind in the kingdom. It was at first imagined, that the splendor of rank would have dazzled the million, and afforded a shield to the dignified perpetrator: those who counted upon this security, paid but an ill compliment to the morals of the Nation. These *Gentry* have since been taught, that the morals and manners of the people are not to be violated with impunity. They have found that even the public prints, whose mistaken lenity has hitherto spared their persons and their crimes, disdained a

criminal taciturnity upon the occasion, and demonstrated their patriotism by stigmatizing what they justly considered as a dishonor to the Country. Their zeal and their clamour appear to have penetrated into the very sanctum of Turf Swindling, and to have frightened even the stoutest of the Banditti.

A mean and pitiful request was made in a succession of anonymous paragraphs, that "*the public would suspend their judgment until a certain club or combination of men, gave their report.*"—Several weeks have elapsed since these *petitions* were made; but as it was probable that the affair was too *mysterious* and *intricate* for a *prompt* decision, no objection was made to the delay. It was however expected, that these gentlemen, sitting in judgment on the character of a man so nearly related to us all, would at least *authenticate* their report by the signature of their respective names. But in this well founded hope we have been disappointed; not one of the *jurors* empanelled upon the occasion, will personally vouch for the innocence of either *master* or *man*, and to have published this extraordinary report, in the first person plural, without informing us whether it was the production of an individual or of a multitude, was an offence against grammar, as well as against sound policy, and good manners, for what confidence can we have in the verdict of an *invisible* jury? and what right has even the *first* man in this Country, to expect that we should implicitly believe an anonymous *ipse dixit*? instead of an explicit and ample explanation which was to establish the *innocence* of the parties, and totally to destroy every vestige of *suspicion*, a compound of impertinent and frivolous assertions and paragraphs, beginning with WE HAVE, &c. are offered to us with all the insolence of despotic authority. The story so far from being elucidated, seems, by

this lame and nameless defence, to be more than ever perplexed: so far from being brought into the clear and brilliant atmosphere of truth, it seems to be more enveloped than ever, in dark and sulphurous clouds, which blacken even to the complection of Erebus, the hapless object, whom it is pretended to bleach and purify! I can easily conceive the confusion which the necessity of doing *SOMETHING* in this nefarious business must have occasioned. No doubt but the distress into which so disastrous an event plunged all those who riot in Pall Mall or elsewhere, must have been considerable; no doubt but they beheld the calamity and ruin with which they were threatened by an event likely in its consequences to have produced a total and happy revolution in the sentiments of their deluded patron. The security they have long enjoyed in the public credulity, and the forbearance, added to their avowed contempt of character, made them at first indifferent to all censure, but in proportion as the buzz increased, their fears augmented, and a resolution was taken to do all that guilt could do to appear *innocent*. Affidavits sometimes impose on vulgar minds. At all events they have their convenience, when judiciously introduced, as well as an alibi, and the magistrate, before whom they are sworn, by lending his name, seems to bear testimony to the truth of the assertions they contain, I do not mean to impeach the veracity of those that have been *made*, though not *produced*, on this occasion, I have every respect for the *rising* reputation, and wonderful dexterity of the groom that has been introduced to public notice with so much parade and circumstance. He may, for ought I know to the contrary, be a *gentleman* of the *strictest* honor, and most *accomplished* manners. The school in which he has been educated certainly indicates as much, and will not permit me to doubt a moment, either of his *rectitude* or *good-breeding*. Yet with all possible

confidence in his *integrity* and *politeness*, and with an equal degree of reverence for the judgment of *those* who recommended this mode of exculpation, I think it was indecent, if not dangerous, to make the character of one of the most elevated men in the kingdom, depend solely upon the credit which may or may not be given, to the testimony of a man, in one of the very lowest, and certainly least honorable occupations in life, and who being unfortunately, though no doubt, *undeservedly*, involved in the same censure that affects his royal master, will find it difficult to escape suspicion. There may be the oeconomy and novelty in attempting to white-wash *two* individuals by *one* affidavit; but I am sure there was little skill in it. Perhaps it was an expedient of necessity and adopted, not from any hope of its being efficacious, but merely as being the least exceptionable; if so, I would ask the *pretended* friends of this hapless youth, if even the most virulent of his enemies (supposing him to have any) could possibly degrade him to a condition more painful? These remarks, however hard they may bear on the parties concerned, are not meant to preserve the unworthy subject alive in the minds of men; on the contrary, they are meant to silence impudent and imprudent efforts, to explain away what cannot be denied, and what, from my soul, I sincerely wish had never happened. It is the farthest from my intention to wound the feelings, or to add to the keen anguish, which the person alluded to must suffer on finding himself become the table talk of grooms and valets. I feel for his situation, and lament that a name which ought to be *idolized*, and a rank which ought to be *respected*, should be familiarly canvassed in the polluted mouths of the outcasts and refuse of society! I am amazed that his pride has not taken offence at the idea of *Vermin* sitting in judgment upon *Excellence*, and that

what ought to be the boast, and comfort of the Nation, should wantonly alarm its fears and incur its reproach; I am grieved, Sir, that he should be so inattentive to his own honor and happiness, at a moment when the fatal consequences arising from a passion for low and profligate company are so strikingly evident in a branch of the Royal Family in France.

LEGION.



POSTSCRIPT.

AN attempt has been made to answer the preceding Letters, but if answers were to flow from the press until every type in Europe was expended, they would not be able to refute any one assertion, or to controvert any one argument contained in the foregoing pages. This is not a declaration proceeding from an arrogant and affected superiority over adversaries that are sorry and contemptible at the best, but a consequence that naturally results from having taken the *right side* of the question, and from having adhered most scrupulously to *facts*, which can neither be palliated nor denied. What is matter of public notoriety cannot decently be disavowed; and if the gentlemen who, with more apparent regard to their *interest* than to their *characters*, have attempted to apologize for dignified profligacy, had recognized the strong and inaccessible ground on which I have taken post, I do not think they would have hazarded a contest from which his Royal Highness is likely to receive such little benefit, and his champions such little *honor*.

It is rather unfortunate, that a pamphlet avowedly written to rescue the Prince of Wales from what is termed "*unmerited odium*," should scarce contain any thing else than an impeachment of the *loyalty* and *good manners* of the person who is said to have attacked the heir apparent with

the most "*unfeeling indecency*." This mode of exculpating guilt will have very little weight with those who are accustomed to reason more logically, and who estimate the force and validity of arguments by their affinity to truth. They will, as well as myself, be at a loss to conjecture, what possible relation there can exist between the vices of *one man*, and the rudeness of *another*; neither can it be well understood, why malice and disloyalty in the latter (supposing these charges to be well-founded) should atone for a gross and infamous violation of every moral and political duty in the *former*.

I do not know that I learnt to make my bow from the same dancing-master that instructed my adversaries, but I will venture to assert, that our ethics are not derived from the same source. Whether my manners have been formed on the system recommended by the late Lord Chesterfield, who was esteemed the best-bred man of his age, or whether they resemble those of Buckhorse, who was certainly the worst; whether my ideas of civil government are taken from those of Sir Robert Filmer, or from those of Algernon Sidney, are of little import to the question under consideration; and as they do not tend to establish either the guilt or innocence of his Royal Highness, they are irrelevant to the subject, and may possibly excite some doubts of the sanity, as well as of the correctness of *that* mind which could introduce them for either purpose; nor is it less curious, that a gentleman, who has published precisely twenty-five pages and an half of what he is pleased to call *Observations on the Letter addressed to the Prince of Wales*, (and which twenty-five pages, with their fraction included, are avowedly written to bleach and purify his Royal Highness) should acknowledge much more than I have asserted,

or even imagined. If this mode of proving the innocence of men, by establishing their guilt, could be introduced at the Old Bailey, the felons in Newgate would have little to apprehend from the verdict of a jury.

The only passages that relate to the subject in question, acknowledge the "*existence of Bacchanalian orgies (a) at Carleton House;*" that "*the Prince of Wales has kept exceeding bad company;*" that "*he ran in debt at one time to the amount of near two hundred thousand pounds;*" that "*he promised to behave better if his debts were paid; and that being paid, he broke his word, and behaved worse;*" that "*his Royal Highness came again to Parliament, for almost four times the former sum, and which sum was far more than either Sardanapalus or Heliogabalus (the worst and most infamous of mankind) could possibly have squandered in the same space of time*" that "*the representatives of the people,*" whether wisely or honestly, is not mentioned, "*thus called upon, have put these debts in a train of liquidation,*" and finally that "*not one of these debts were contracted by the man who has asked us to discharge them!*" (b) What is this but accusing his Royal Highness, and that

(a) Observations on the Letter addressed to the Prince of Wales, p. 7.

(b) A reference to the Author will best ascertain the fidelity with which I have quoted him. Vide page 8 of the Observations on a Letter addressed to the Prince of Wales, and on those signed Neptune and Legion.

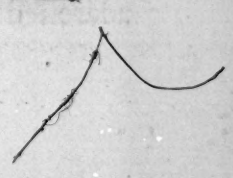
"How the immense sums that have been raised have been misapplied, it is almost impossible even to guess. In transactions which would reflect such eternal disgrace upon the abettors of them, conjecture must wander wide of the mark. The public have seen debts to the amount of near two hundred thousand pounds contracted in a short period; they have also seen those debts discharged by parliament. It is not to be wondered, after his Majesty's message, stating a well-grounded expectation that the Prince would avoid con-

"*most unmannerly,*" "*most maliciously*" and certainly "*most disloyally*") of obtaining money under false pretences? what is it in fact, but pleading guilty to the indictment that has been preferred, and suing to that tribunal to which I have appealed, for mercy on the delinquent? If this man writes for bread, I pity him;—If to instruct us, I think he has mistaken his talents; and if to pay court to the heir apparent, I am afraid that the advantages I have derived from his testimony, will operate to his prejudice, and cancel every claim he can possibly urge to the smiles of his Royal Highness, who certainly owes very little to the judgment, whatever he may do to the zeal of such champions. If this gentleman really felt that affection which he professes for the Prince, it would have been better shewn by a profound silence on a subject which will not bear investigation, and which cannot occur to the mind, without manifest injury to his Royal Highness; the servility however of those who *out* of parliament would excuse the licentious extravagance of Carleton House, is less reprehensible than that which would administer to it from *within*.

tracting any debts in future, that his Royal Highness's *bangers-on* should endeavour to plunge him again into difficulties, because, as I have stated, and as it was generally believed, that was part of their system; but it is exceedingly to be wondered, that there should have been found in this nation, persons weak and wicked enough to trust him; or rather them, for it is impossible, if we consider the immensity of the sum, had he united the vices of Sardanapalus with those of Heliogabalus, that he could in so short a time have squandered it. However that may be, the public have seen their representatives called upon for a sum of almost four times the bulk of the former; they have seen the sum, large as it is, in a train of liquidation through the channel of parliament; they have seen men whom every one knew to have been insolvent, ever since the first of the transactions alluded to, live in a state of opulence and splendor; and when they compare these two circumstances, they will form their own opinion of this application of national property."

In the former instance, its influence and example are confined within small limits, by the obscurity and poverty of the parties; besides indigence has a claim to indulgence, for hunger hard pressed, may tempt a man to do that, which relieved from the pressure of famine, he would revolt at—The baseness cannot be very widely diffused, and not being committed in violation of any direct and positive engagement, the mischief resulting from it will be trifling and unimportant; but in the latter instance, it assumes a more criminal and more dangerous appearance.—A PART deputed by the whole, to conduct the complicated interests of a wide extended Empire, cannot depart from that sobriety and rectitude to which they are pledged for the benefit of that whole, and having duties to fulfil, they should remember that they have a character to preserve—In them, a complaisance of the description, I have stigmatised in the former as servility, is neither more nor less than a breach of trust to the public, which the nation in general, and the immediate constituents of the offending party in particular are called upon to resent and punish—A man with a character so foul and so very black, that even ink cannot stain it, seemed disposed on the 14th instant, to have complimented his Royal Highness with even more than he asked; and if the favor (a) expected in return for this tribute of loyalty in advance, could possibly restore degraded reputation, the quota, of the *honorable* member would be wonderfully well laid out, with a certainty of repayment and an interest so usurious, that even Pulteney himself would blush to exact or receive it. When men of this description obtain seats in the House of Commons, it proves that the constituent part of the nation is to the full as corrupt, as their representatives, and makes the question of reform a problem much

(a) A Peerage.



more difficult to be solved than we imagine. The man, whose proposal in parliament was treated with scorn by all parties, aims it is said at a Peerage, but despairing to obtain it in the *present* reign, he assures himself to a certainty of it in the *next*, by becoming the Pander to vice. Is there any passage or sentence in either of the preceding letters on the principles of his Royal Highness as the servile harrangue of this worthless and litigious character? What opinion must even *this* man (who would lavish without limitation or remorse the treasures of the country, on senseless dissipation) entertain of the Prince, when he expects in return for this breach of public duty, that his Royal Highness would on his accession to the Throne, select him for British Peerage? How fallen, how very much dishonored and degraded, must the Heir Apparent appear, when the most despicable of mankind believe him capable of admitting them to his confidence and councils? I have no aversion to the hereditary Nobility of England; on the contrary my respect for the aristocracy is known, and can be attested by men, whose exemplary probity, talents and manners, justify their claim to distinction, and add lustre to their titles: but, my reverence for the Peerage must depend on the *quality* of the materials of which it is composed, and it is from my veneration for this branch of the legislature I assert, that its dignity cannot survive its purity. It is already surcharged with offal, and will not bear any farther addition, without manifest danger to its existence, and that of the monarchy. It is from the sincerest affection for both; it is that their permanency may be assured, and their respective excellencies descend to future times; it is that the country which I love may be preserved from uproar and civil tumult, that this strong, and I trust effectual remonstrance has been addressed to a man, whose scandalous and expensive levities

are unhappily of a nature, to make us loath and detest royalty: Whose conduct has excited alarm and disgust throughout the nation, and whose excesses have been brought more forcibly to our view, by the history of the times, and that at a moment, when the country, defrauded and deserted by a German despot, whose execrable name ought to be erased from the list of sovereigns, by the hands of the common hangman, provoked the most temperate and best affected men in the kingdom to inquire, with anger and disdain,

IF PRINCES HAVE A PRIVILEGE TO BE SCOUNDRELS?

Well may the republicans repose on their arms and boast that their work will be done by the Princes of the blood!—Well may the partizans of Mr. Paine triumph in the vices of courts, and look forward with confidence to the extermination of monarchy—it is by transactions so foul and dishonorable;—it is by a conduct so scandalous and disgraceful, that the peace of society and the very existence of Governments are endangered. It is shameful and unpardonable, that those who are selected from the general mass and elevated to the highest honors with stipends ample and munificent even to prodigality, for the important and dignified purpose of enforcing obedience to the laws, should be the first to violate them, and encourage by their example every excess of uproar and wild riot.

Those who would offer in excuse for such licence and disorder; that there is *one* moral for courts, and *another* for the people, are not aware of the mischief that may result from a distinction so degrading to both, and which is no less repugnant to reason than it is offensive to virtue. In matters of morality and right, mankind ought to be on a par, and every attempt to weaken, efface, or destroy this

salutary; this happy equality, the only one worthy of our emulation! argues equal profligacy and impudence—It was easy to foresee from the principles and conduct of those whom his Royal Highness admitted to his confidence and table in early life, what would be the sad issue of a selection so injudicious and so very incompatible with his elevated rank in society?

The influence which such men would obtain over his infant and uninformed mind, was a natural consequence, which however it may awaken our compassion for the past, or our fears for the future, ought not to surprise us. I do not enter into the history of his amours, nor into the very equivocal character of the lady whom one part of what is called, the fashionable world, considered as his *mistress*, and avoided; and whom the other, more servile and corrupt, regarded as a woman whose caresses were registered, and legalised in heaven, if not on earth, and whose mockery of a sacrament and of the laws gave her a passport to that society from which women less exceptionable were excluded—I am willing that this transaction, disreputable and connected as it is, with that, might have endangered his succession, if it had been honestly investigated, should be buried in oblivion, but I will never subscribe to the justice or expediency of administering to vice and folly, or of supporting expensive establishments which impoverish the country, while they enervate its character, and corrupt its morals. It was with a view to reclaim his Royal Highness from bad company, that the letters signed Neptune were addressed to him in 1784, and when at the distance of seven years the scandalous adventure at Newmarket proved, that admonitions were without effect; when it appeared that bad habits and bad example had taken strong and deep root in a mind, on the purity of which the fate of millions might hereafter depend,

it was surely justifiable in the writer who signs himself Legion, to expose in all the severity of language, a conduct in which guilt and meanness disputing the superiority, aimed at depriving the nation of its fairest hope and promise.—It is unnecessary to say what ought to have been the reflections of the Prince at these different periods, when the author of those letters unconnected as he was, and ever will remain with every description of party and cabal, admonished his Royal Highness of his danger, and predicted what has happened.—Matter of much more immediate import to the nation, than his countenancing faction and every species of profligate libertinism has occurred; principles have been manifested which it behoves us to resist, and which announce as little judgment as good faith in the quarter from whence they originated.

A credit most shamefully abused, and finally exhausted, has compelled the Prince of Wales to request Parliament to increase his income, not altogether for the purpose of defraying the expences of an enlarged establishment, but to discharge incumbrances which he pledged himself in 1787, should never be contracted—The amount of the debt, enormous as it is, does not startle us so much, as the indecency of *breaking* his word to the nation, and if he has observed such little good faith as *Prince of Wales*, what right have we to expect a conduct more correct and more consonant with his obligations, when he assumes a more exalted station in the country? I will not abandon facts for conjecture, by asking if his Royal Highness would have applied to Parliament for so much of the public money, if he could have taken it *without*? Neither will I inquire, if while he conforms in appearance to the constitution, he considers the people as his Bankers, and their representatives as their clerks?—All that I contend for is, that the country will be equally wronged and insulted, whether those debts are dis-

charged through the medium of the House of Commons, or by a mandare addressed in the first instance to the clerks of the Exchequer.

Another matter for consideration is, that this second application unlike the first, was not accompanied by any assurance either from the king or his Royal Highness, that no future demand of the kind should be repeated—This omission is certainly extraordinary and merits observation.—It warrants a belief, that the parties consider themselves entitled to call on the extra bounty of the nation whenever they think proper, or (which must be matter of infinite pain and humiliation to his Royal Highness) that the assurance was not given, because its veracity could not be relied on; Our experience unhappily gives equal force and validity to both suppositions, and with such clear and explicit evidence of the facts upon record, it was the duty of a British House of Commons, and I am sure it would have been the more consistent with its honor, to have spoken out with the dignity of manhood, and said

“ Thus far shall ye go, and no farther.”

It was incumbent on the representatives of the people to have prescribed bounds to unfeeling prodigality and to insatiate avarice, and not to have given IMPUNITY to the insolence, of the one, and to the rapacity of the other. Such a conduct would have restored the House of Commons to that credit and confidence with the nation without which its duration will at best be precarious, and rather endured than approved, and which would have been a complete answer to petitions for reform. The only question to be considered, is not such as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was constrained to submit to the judgment of parliament, and on which many will decide who have little right to give an opinion either from their capacity or their rectitude.—It is not, whether the Prince of Wales shall have an annual income of 65,000, or

125,000 pounds, and be permitted to call occasionally, for temporary aids, but whether the former sum in addition to the Duchy of Cornwall (a) was not a very ample provision

(a) Instead of adhering to what alone the Commons of Great Britain were bound to notice, and to which alone they should have confined themselves—instead of taking that line which was pointed out by the message in 1787, and authorised by a departure from it in 1795—An attempt was made to entangle and perplex a constitutional question of considerable magnitude, with questions of law, and to convert Parliament into a Court of Chancery to hear an improbable charge of embezzlement or misapplication of property in trust, preferred on behalf of a minor against his father.—I will not distress the feelings, nor alarm the fears of those gentlemen who would have degraded the representative dignity, by questions which can only be discussed with propriety and effect, in a Court of Law or Equity—Their motives for so extraordinary a departure from their line of duty, may possibly have been perfectly honorable and disinterested; but it is a question of legislation, and not of law, which they were called upon to decide, and a question which very materially relates to the honor and security of the Royal Family on the one side, and to the preservation of the constitution on the other, for if we lose it, where shall we seek another? Restore it to its purity, and where can we find its equal? The question to be considered is not whether the Duchy of Cornwall belongs in fee to the Prince of Wales—It is not whether he holds it by Military Tenure, or by the Peers Tenure, or whether the King, having received the rehts during the minority of the Prince, should be called upon to refund, what, after deducting the expences of his education and maintenance, would be no object either to the nation, or to his Royal Highness, but whether the Prince of Wales shall come to Parliament for a million of the public money, whenever he thinks proper; and whether it is honest or grateful in those whom the country supports in splendor and magnificence, to run riot, and waste its property, in profligate and expensive pleasures, in which decency, taste, and œconomy, are equally sacrificed? It is not a frivolous dispute between a guardian and his ward, of little import even to the parties, and of much less to the nation, but a matter involving in it a variety of serious and national considerations—It is whether the morals of the country shall be preserved or destroyed—It is whether those who have dared to offer them every possible insult, shall be allowed to proceed in their disgraceful career with impunity?—It is in fact whether we will any longer submit to the insolent licentiousness of those, who seem by their conduct to imagine that we are created for their sole use and convenience, and fit only to administer to their vices and necessities?—

and fully adequate to support the splendor of an individual of his exalted rank and pretensions, and whether, when

I can pity and forgive the imbecillity that is flattered by such an idea, but the guilt that would act in conformity to it, deserves chastisement, and shall find no quarter.

I will spare his Royal Highness the painful recital of transactions, which are no less repugnant to his obligations to society, than they have been ruinous and disgraceful to himself. I wish to draw a veil between our indignant and offended sight, and those disreputable scenes, which have finally deprived him and his brothers of that affection and respect, which were spontaneously bestowed and fondly continued, while the most distant hope was entertained of amendment or contrition. I will not comment on their disgraceful history, nor dwell on the shameless profligacy, that has dared to appear at a place of public resort in defiance of all decency and decorum, with an acknowledged prostitute, neither will I enlarge on the rash and inconsiderate levity, of appropriating to her use the Royal carriages, and attendants in Royal liveries, allowed him by the munificence of the nation to support the splendor of his rank, and not to insult the morals and good sense of the country.—Flagrant, and indecent as this conduct unquestionably is, its turpitude is lost in the magnitude of other and more important considerations, which the criminal and inexplicable profligacy of Princes (as if a fatality attended them!) press on our attention, and which I will defy the most cool and collected mind to contemplate without gloom and alarm. It is not whether the Heir Apparent shall have a larger or a lesser establishment—It is not whether he shall be at liberty to contract debts, beyond his ability to discharge, but whether he shall be allowed to persevere in a line of conduct which may endanger the peace of the country, and finally consign him to beggary and exile? This is in fact the question that Parliament is called upon to decide, and as it involves in it the ease, comfort, and security of every individual in the empire, it behoves the House of Peers to whom the Commons may possibly refer the important consideration, and to whose rectitude of conduct the nation looks up with hope and confidence, to give it the attention it deserves, and to stand between their country and ruin. Woe be to Parliament and to the British Empire, whenever the former has the guilt or imprudence to act in opposition to the general sense of the latter; nor can it be too strongly impressed on the memory of both, that the prodigality which accomplished the ruin of the Court of Versailles, led also to the complete Bankruptcy of Royalty in France. The course which the legislature of this country has to steer may be difficult and perilous, but with such visible and numerous beacons on every side, there will be insanity or something worse in mistaking it.—The unexampled distress of the times—

settled on him, it was decent or just in his Royal Highness to have exceeded it?

This is the only point of view in which parliament can with propriety consider the application, that has been recently made; it is the only one on which I can descend to join issue with those who are disposed to support the claim. Honor, policy and gratitude forbade its being made in any form or shape, and least of all by juggle, and were I disposed to enjoy a malignant triumph over those who have unfortunately lowered themselves by this measure in the public estimation, I am most amply furnished with the means; but feeling for declining age, and commiserating all the moral infirmities annexed to it, I will spare majesty the reproach which it appears to have incurred, and leave the country to decide on the extreme indiscretion that has provoked a discussion so unfavorable to the cause of monarchy. As joint bondsman with his son, he would have done well to have preserved his Royal Highness from the ignominy of his present situation: It was his interest, and surely it was his duty, to have shewn in times like the present, full of peril and of danger, that a king can be faithful to his engagements.

the frequent and heavy demands for money to prosecute the war to an honorable conclusion, forbid most eloquently, and most forcibly any improvident or wanton expenditure of the public treasure, and especially in favor of an individual whose claim to the generosity of the nation is denied, and with whose conduct such strong and universal dissatisfaction has been expressed.—It behoves Parliament to reflect well on the probable consequences of their present proceedings.—There is wisdom in deliberation, and it behoves them to consider if what they intend for kindness may not prove the reverse? It is possible that much mischief may result from a mistaken and ill-timed generosity, not only to the Sovereign whom it is their duty to respect, and to his offspring, whom they would support and cherish in a style suitable to their exalted rank in society, but to the country whose tranquility they are bound by the strongest of all possible ties to preserve.

Strong as these animadversions may appear to weak and timid men; to men who mean well, and think right, but who are afraid to say what they think; Offensive and democratic as these animadversions may be represented by the servile and corrupt; I will venture to assert that my loyalty has much less of that alloy in it, than those who flatter and mislead the Prince.—I love royalty, but it must have its appendages, as well as its trappings, or its claim to respect will be laughed at, and its existence endangered—I have been accused of attacking his Royal Highness with indecency, but does the indecency of *my* language equal the indecency of *his* conduct, and is vice in full dress to be worshipped?—Can birth or titles sanction crime, or give to vice and folly a privilege to insult public morals and to squander the public money with impunity? Those who can answer in the affirmative are qualified for an idolatry more filthy and absurd than that of the Jews, and to such worship I consign them.—With respect to the motives that urged me to the publication of the foregoing pages, they are justified by the occasion that excited them—I really foresee much serious and not very remote mischief to the constitution; unless principles of rectitude are speedily adopted, and a good example given by those in whom it is infamy to give a bad one, and whenever the signs of amendment appear at Carleton House, and his Royal Highness acknowledges by his *conduct*, what he owes to his country, I will be as ready to applaud, as I have been to censure.—He is no longer juvenile, and he will do well to remember, that what are follies at TWENTY are vices at FORTY.

It must however be left to time to discover what effect these letters will have on the mind of the person to whom they are addressed;—it is possible that he may regard them as the expedient of a necessitous scribbler to obtain temporary relief; it is even possible, that his Royal High-

ness may have *smiled* at animadversions, which ought to have excited other sensations than those of merriment; he may even have branded the pamphlet, as the miserable catchpenny of an author, who availing himself of a popular topic, would answer and refute his own assertions;—if such *should* have been the observations of the Prince, to the person *whom he requested would read the letter to him* and if the idea that I am venal, or that I am profligate enough to write, on *both sides* of the question, should afford any consolation to his *royal* mind, he is right welcome to every enjoyment it can afford him; I certainly shall not envy either his feelings or his judgment. There are those about the Prince, who may suggest and foster such an idea, while others may represent the author as a man tainted with democracy, and disaffected to the throne. To his Royal Highness and those of the *former* description it may be a sufficient answer to their opinions and conjectures, that superior to the infamy of writing for hire, and having no object in view but to preserve the constitution from the danger with which it is menaced by the conduct of the male branches of the Royal Family, I have given the profits of this publication, whatever they may be, to the Publisher: and to those of the latter description who may be disposed to brand me as democratic, I have only to lament that an odium should of late become attached to what happily forms a very considerable ingredient in our admirable constitution, and which should be cherished—not decried, at a moment when it is attempted to supplant our national democracy by a wild and ruthless democracy subversive of morals, religion, and all public and private security—I have neither spleen nor resentment to gratify against the Royal Family; on the contrary, I have much affection and respect for them, but their smiles, unless in approbation of a conduct which I feel to be laudable and just, have no charms, and as to their

frowns, it is impossible they can disturb or affect me—I am ready to pay every homage that is due to the sovereign and his family—Their rank in the constitution certainly gives them a claim to affection and respect, but it is only a conduct correspondent with their station, that can legitimate and ratify the claim; allegiance, respect, friendship, and all the various duties which men living together in society, owe to each other, are relative and reciprocal: dependent on the fidelity by which they act towards each other, and no longer binding on *one* side than they are accurately observed and fulfilled on the *other*.—This is my creed; it is the orthodox creed of the British constitution, to which I will most religiously adhere to the last moment of my existence. With respect to my pursuits in life, I have nothing to hope, and certainly nothing to fear from the favor or the anger, of those who are the objects of this remonstrance: my mind, prepared for the worst, has nothing to apprehend from the events of these strange, disjointed times; and to whatever sum, an income competent to the simplicity of my life and manners, may be hereafter reduced, I am resolved to live within it—It is the barrier to my independance; and independance, it is well known, is the best security that mankind can have for their integrity.—

SECOND POSTSCRIPT.

June 15, 1795.

IT was generally reported on the 1st instant, that a message of a conciliatory nature would be sent by the Prince of Wales to the House of Commons, the chief object of which was to allay the strong ferment which a message from the king had excited throughout the country, and which could not possibly have had any other effect than that of indisposing the public mind against his Royal Highness and against Monarchy. The forgiving temper of the nation will always incline it to receive with equal pleasure and alacrity, any thing in the shape of an apology, and when the magnitude of the affront that had been offered, and the principle in which it most probably originated, are considered, it was surely reasonable to expect that an atonement proportioned to the insult would have been made.— Hence the full credit that was instantly given to the report, and (disdaining to investigate motives) what evidently resulted from fear, was generously assigned to contrition. If this well-grounded expectation had been realised, the ill humor provoked by insolence and injustice, would have subsided, and the odium which eclipses his Royal Highness, to a darkness worse than total, would have been removed, but our hopes were no sooner raised than they were destroyed, and the delusion became evident to all, but those who had a legal right to defeat and punish it. The message had,

nothing conciliatory, but the extreme mildness with which it was delivered, which being natural to the manners of the man, the merit, if any, is trifling, and belongs entirely to Mr. Anstruther. This gentleman, it seems, was authorised to inform the House of Commons that "*the wish of his Royal Highness on the occasion was entirely to consult the wisdom of Parliament; that he desired nothing but what the country might cordially be induced to think he ought to have; and finally that he left all matters relative to the regulation of his establishment and the payment of his debts, to the wisdom and discretion of Parliament.*" If these are to be considered as words, of course, like "*honorable,*" "*right honorable,*" "*illustrious,*" "*noble,*" and many others of the same description I have no objection to their obtaining that currency which the ridiculous and dangerous refinement of the times has unhappily given to perverted language; I am too feeble to stem this torrent of fraud alone, yet inadequate as my strength may be to resist its force, I will make the effort, and leave it to the prudence, and virtue of my country to succour, or abandon me—but if these words are to be received agreeable to their common import, and in the only sense in which they are intelligible to men of sober and correct minds, I deny that they afford the most distant proof of either condescension, shame, remorse, humiliation, or justice in his Royal Highness, and much less do they establish his claim to our confidence or forgiveness, of that which has diffused a very serious and general alarm throughout the whole country—I really do not discover any extraordinary forbearance, in submitting to forms, which cannot be violated without imminent personal risque, nor is the promised acquiescence with whatever establishment the wisdom and discretion of Parliament shall prescribe, entitled to much admiration when we reflect on the impossibility of obtaining it by any other means. I really do not

perceive any great condescension, in agreeing to accept as a *favor*, what it was very well known, would never have been granted on any other condition, nor can I discover any thing moderate, or conciliatory in a demand for SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS which leaves only to those who are to advance a sum scandalously enormous, the *mode* by which it is to be raised—What is it in fact, but the History of the Sturdy Beggar, who, finding it more convenient to receive as a *boon*, what he would have exacted by force as a *right*, makes a merit of the concession, and laughs at us while he wrongs us? Surely the nation has a claim to better treatment; nor does it redound to the honor of the Prince, that he should owe more to the compassion and generosity of the country than it has ever received from his justice or discretion. To be so indebted, is a mendicancy of the worst and most odious description. It is full time that his Royal Highness should be told that every man in society has duties to fulfil and obligations to discharge; there is no truth more evident, and the sovereign and his family have more of both than any other description of people:—Their restraints are necessarily greater, for exclusive of that respect and obedience which they owe in common to the laws, it is incumbent on them to give good example, and to discountenance by the purity of their manners in public and in private, every appearance of vice and intemperance—nor is this sobriety of conduct or this sacrifice (if it should be deemed such) required without an equivalent, and an equivalent of so honorable, so captivating, and so bewitching a nature, as to reflect little credit on the principles and taste of those, who can slight or withstand it. It is an equivalent of so rich and splendid a quality, that it appears to every good mind, sufficient to tempt vice to be virtuous, and even avarice to be generous.—I do not allude to the munificent income

which supports the pageantry and rewards the painful decorum of majesty, but to that species of recompense which is less fluctuating in value, and less perishable in its nature; I allude to that species of compensation which exceeds all estimate, and which is as permanent as I feel it to be glorious. I mean the love, and adoration of the whole country; I mean that warm, and exhilarating interest, which an entire people always take in the felicity of those who deserve their affection, and whose plaudits descending to the latest posterity, confer at once both happiness and fame. If these virtuous and salutary precepts had been instilled into the mind of the Prince and of his brothers, they would not have to lament in the very prime of manhood, their present humbled and degraded situation, but their infancy and earlier years have been shamefully neglected, and corrupt habits and corrupt example, having completed, what commenced in a faulty and vicious education, we find the eldest of them coming forward, and claiming not only *exemption* from all the wholesome restraints of economy and temperance, but *reward* for having violated them, and having failed in gratitude, duty, and respect to those who contribute to his magnificence—for what other interpretation can honestly be given to the application which has been made to Parliament in 1795, to discharge debts amounting to quadruple the sum that was paid in 1787, under a solemn assurance that no future demand should be made on the exhausted bounty of the nation?—What else is the offer to “*submit to the wisdom of Parliament the mode for liquidating his debts,*” but a tacit denial of any right on his part to provide for them; and if he had ever considered himself obliged to discharge them, would he have contracted them? I do not know if the reading of the Prince of Wales has ever extended to natural his-

tory, but I find in the conduct of the cuckoo, something that appears to have suggested to his Royal Highness the idea of leaving to others the task of providing for his incumbrances; if this should be the fact, there may be some ingenuity in the contrivance, but I am sure it argues little policy and less rectitude, and though some of those who pretend to have possessed his confidence, (a) may have

(a) The capacity of Mr. Sheridan to give advice, cannot well be disputed;—He has been long enough in the school of adversity, to have acquired very competent ideas of discretion, and he is certainly of an age to practice what he has learnt, without incurring the reproach of premature sobriety. It is unimportant, however, to inquire into the *extent* of the influence and confidence which that gentleman declares he formerly possessed at Carleton House—Nor is it very relative to the question before us, to inquire if the advice which he acknowledges he gave to the Heir Apparent was salutary or pernicious—If it was the *former*, we are authorised to assert from the conduct of the Prince, that the influence of the gentleman over the mind of his Royal Pupil was not so extensive as he insinuated; and if it was of the *latter description*, we have equally to lament that his Royal Highness had *such* a Tutor, and was so apt a scholar—I am not of a temper to do intentional wrong, nor do I think it justifiable to hold out a string of interrogatories, for the purpose of questioning a man until his guilt is discovered.—Mr. Sheridan declares that he always gave good council to the Prince, and we are bound to believe him until we are fully assured to the contrary—Trusting therefore to his honor for the veracity of the assertion, and admitting that he was fully in the confidence of his Royal Highness, as he says he was, it may not be improper to ask him by whose advice the Heir Apparent was prevailed upon at the time of the Regency to sacrifice the dignity of rank, and in some degree his honor, by becoming the Proprietor of a News Paper? This transaction accompanied as it is by circumstances of meanness and atrocity which could only have resulted from the most artful and malignant councils is upon record—The names of those who are answerable for the punctual payment of the annuity can be produced—The sum paid down on the assignment of the Morning Post is no secret, and sufficient evidence were it necessary, can be produced to prove that the treasury might have had the Paper if it had thought proper to *outrbid* his Royal Highness. Situated as Mr. Sheridan was at the epoch alluded to; in habits of familiar intercourse with the Heir Apparent, and in his confidence and secrets as he declares himself to have been, it is impossible that the *adviser* of this notable expedient could have been *unknown* to him, and he owes it to the country in

countenanced the trick by their example, yet if any credit is due to their assertions, their advice was salutary,

general, and to his constituents at Stafford in particular, to reveal the names of the gentlemen, who, at this period, proposed that SIXTY THOUSAND POUNDS, should be devoted to the purpose of purchasing a decided interest in as many of the Public Prints, as that sum could obtain. Admitting that they would have been purchased with a liberality correspondent with the magnificence of their intended Proprietor, and with his known disregard of the *value* of the thing bought, and of the *price* paid for it—We may state that the number would have amounted to at least a dozen, and it is of that gentleman who is so perfectly acquainted with the nature and influence of our Public Prints, and who owes so very much of his reputation to their indefatigable industry I will ask, if even his powers are capable to calculate the extent of *that* force, and the *consequences* of *that* superiority which TWELVE NEWSPAPERS in the service and pay of Carleton House would have given to the Prince, and his Abettors over the regular Government, when Majesty, in an eclipse, left it with no other support than its virtue and intrepidity?—I will not ask from what fund that sum was to have been furnished, nor how much of the present debt was incurred in feasting and bribing the despicable apostates in both Houses of Parliament, some of whom had solemnly pledged themselves to the minister to support the only measures which could preserve the Crown on the head of their Sovereign, and their country, from a Banditti of Bankrupts! Neither will I comment on the rank and vicious fertility of *that* mind, which suggested the expedient by which the Government of the country was to have been wrested from those to whom the King had delegated it, and who alone could legally have divested them of it—The faction thus entrenched, and in a manner secured from all animadversion, might have abused or perverted the powers of Government with impunity, while the people, debarred, with their own money, of the accustomed channels of free and impartial information, would have contributed to the fraud that robbed them in the first instance of their property, and in the second, of that constitutional check, and control, which affords them perhaps the best, and most effectual security against despotism—Whenever time shall reveal the *items* of this scandalous account, which Parliament is called upon to discharge in the *gross*, posterity may possibly be informed who they were that gave bad advice, and bad example to the deluded, ruined, and hapless object of this address—The present generation deprived of the means of ample information, is not only required to take assertions upon trust, but to believe them against the strong evidence of appearances, and the still stronger testimony of its senses!

and as it tended to check a passion for imitating defects, in preference to perfection, it ought to have been followed.

His Royal Highness in that case would have had less reason to regret the intimacies to which he admitted these men, and the nation less cause to reprobate their turpitude and affrontery.

The shameful debt which has angered the nation even to madness, would most probably never have been contracted, and the friends of his Royal Highness would have been relieved from the laborious task of urging the necessity of something like a submission on his part to the pleasure of parliament, and which from the circumstance of its having been made a fortnight after the application, authorizes an opinion that it was rather a measure of necessity than of choice. This message, announced with so much art and industry to be of a conciliatory nature, afforded an admirable pretext to many who have interests detached from those of their constituents, to act not only in direct violation of the trust reposed in them; but to the sentiments that many of them avowed out of parliament, when the nation surprised by a second demand on its abused generosity, was equally offended by the breach of faith, and at the juggle by which the payment of the debts and an increased establishment, were artfully coupled together. I conversed at the time with men of different parties in the House of Commons, all of whom either lamented that the subject should have been brought forward, or they execrated the indecency of making such a request; while all of them entertained the same opinion respecting the conduct of his Royal Highness, and the principles from which *that* conduct has resulted:—They all agreed that “*the nation ought not to have heard of those debts, and, that it was not bound to pay them!*”

The former of these opinions was universal, and the

difference that arose on the latter, was more from motives of compassion, than from a conviction that the Prince of Wales had a right to expect parliament to discharge his debts—

From these opinions, so universally acknowledged, and so incontrovertibly true, it was reasonable to expect that those who professed them, would have acted in conformity to their declaration, and resisted every attempt to engage parliament in a measure, from which disgrace to the Prince and dishonor to themselves, with perhaps much ultimate and serious mischief to the country, would inevitably ensue. But many of the men who held the language of truth out of parliament, contradicted their professions, and some of them their promises, by the vote they gave on the first instant, and connived at the delusion, by which the country, pressed and overwhelmed as it is with debt, is to be saddled with fresh burthens in order to administer to the ruthless dissipation of a man, who has failed in the most essential of his engagements, and whose rank and affinity to the throne are opposed to the numberless well-founded charges that have been brought, not only against his discretion, but against his probity.

To this scandalous breach of faith to the nation—no answer was made;—no apology was offered! The silence observed upon the occasion, was a tacit acknowledgment of guilt, and they have left him to account for the FALSEHOOD, with which he has abused the credulity of the nation.

To the reproach of indiscretion; to the unexaggerated charges of shameful and aggravated misconduct, nothing was opposed, but a pretended "*necessity for supporting the dignity of his illustrious rank, and the splendor of the HEIR APPARENT,*" as if the accident of birth could (among beings calling themselves *rational*) atone for a deficiency of talents and of rectitude!

It was in vain that the few who felt for the dignity of

parliament; for the quiet of their country; for the wounded honor of the Prince; and above all, for the interests of a loyal and generous people, curbed to a premature impotence by the pressure of accumulating taxes, urged the indecency of transmitting his Royal Highness branded to posterity on the journals of the House of Commons as a LIAR! It was in vain that they beseeched parliament to PAUSE! and seriously contemplate the ruin that might ultimately ensue to the country and the Royal Family, by sanctioning the prodigality which impoverished the former, and dishonored the latter; their honest voice was stifled by the profligacy of their opponents, and the nation must unfortunately abide by the consequences! It is the duty of those who call themselves the friends of his Royal Highness, and who would deserve his confidence, to rescue him from a stigma so indelible. As an individual, interested in the preservation of the constitution, and anxious that the honor of all the branches of the Royal Family should be preserved unfulled, I cannot express in too strong language my apprehension that much disrespect to the heir apparent, and much danger to the kingdom will ensue, if parliament should charge itself with the payment of debts, of which it ought not to take cognizance, and which by their interference, will be acknowledging in direct terms to the world that the Prince of Wales, their probably future sovereign, is not fit to be trusted! Imprudent as he has acted, it would pain me to behold him fettered in private matters which however they may import the moral character of the man, do not, and ought not, to fall within the jurisdiction of parliament. The line of conduct for the House of Commons to adopt, is very obvious, and cannot be mistaken, if its pride or purity should happily bear any affinity to the character that it *ought* to possess in the country. It is in its power to rescue itself from the odium it inherits

from the known servility and disgraceful venality of *former* parliaments; the opportunity is certainly favourable; it is not yet too late, nor can it be too often repeated, or too vehemently urged, that the future quiet of the empire absolutely depends on the degree of fidelity, with which those who are deputed by the nation to conduct its concerns, discharge the trust reposed in them.

They are unexpectedly, and in some measure, unfairly called upon, for a sum of money, their proportion of which compared to that of their constituents, will be very small indeed, and this application for a portion of the public wealth is made at a moment when the country is in a ferment, and engaged in a war, the issue of which, is extremely doubtful, and which, if unfortunate, may lead to the greatest, and most dreadful of all calamities—a **REVOLUTION!** It is needless to dwell on the shameful indecency of such an application.

Those who are capable of making a fair estimate of the different pretensions of mankind to honors and rewards will acknowledge that it is nonsense or something worse to plead the rank of the individual on this occasion, in justification of the demand, and by their decision I am content to abide—The object of this second Postscript is to warn Parliament, while it has yet the power to oppose its irrevocable fiat, of the alarm and despondency which their compliance will occasion throughout the British empire—I wish to forewarn Parliament of the dishonor it will entail on itself, and of the hazard to which it will expose the nation, by recognising of debts which it cannot descend to notice, consistent with its dignity and the justice it owes to the country;—my intention is not to degrade, but to exalt Parliament in the public opinion: my object is to ensure it that respect, esteem, and veneration, to which it is entitled by the courtsey of the constitution and to behold it,

what it is supposed and ever ought, to be; the security of the people against fraud and oppression;—their refuge from despondency! I wish it to be considered and beloved as an efficient barrier and our best safeguard against every species of encroachment on the part of the crown; as the only power to which it may be necessary to resort for protection or redress in the *last* instance and the only power, by which regal licentiousness is to be curbed or its delinquency punished. In a word, that the trust reposed in it may be executed with that firmness and integrity, which ought to characterise the senate of a free people, and which can alone ensure happiness and liberty to them and their posterity. It is under the fullest conviction that the legal authority of Parliament is competent to all these important purposes, and that a confidence in its force, purity, and vigilance, can alone preserve its credit and stability, I assert it would have been wisdom, as well as justice in the House of Commons to have only noticed that part of the message from the throne, which related to an establishment for the Heir Apparent—It was the only line of conduct for the representatives of the people to have adopted, and the reproof to majesty would have been the stronger and more dignified by being SILENT! It is impossible but the King must have been apprised of the consequences that would result from an application to Parliament to discharge the debts of the Prince of Wales, after the assurance that had been given in 1787, that no such application would in future be made—The danger of such a measure must certainly have been suggested to his majesty—A silence on a matter so connected with his dignity and the quiet of the country, would have been criminal in the extreme, and I cannot think so ill of the confidential servants of the crown, and of the chancellor of the Exchequer in particular, as to believe them

capable of so gross and unpardonable an omission—Mr. Pitt, pledged in some degree for the observance of the promise (by having been the bearer of the former message) was more than any other member of the Cabinet, called upon to state to his Royal Master, that the second message was no less injurious to his honor, than it was disrespectful to Parliament and the nation, and that being compelled by the situation he held to deliver the message, he could not obey his Majesty's commands without apprising him of the mischiefs that might result from it.

That such a representation was made cannot well be doubted—It would have been a breach of duty to the Sovereign, to the country and himself, not to have done it, and having done it, the Fiction in law which we have hitherto regarded, and cherished as a truth, is in a manner annihilated.

I will pass over the indecency of embarrassing the persons intrusted with the executive Government, with questions of domestic finance, with which the public have no concern; neither will I comment on the imprudence which reduced the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the painful alternative of either complying with a requisition unreasonable in point of fact, and certainly injudicious with respect to time; or, of resigning, at the most critical period of a war, the most hazardous and most important in which Great Britain was ever engaged. Those who are disposed to censure the minister for the election he has made, may not perhaps have sufficiently weighed in their own minds the very imminent risque which would probably ensue from a change in his Majesty's councils, in the middle of a campaign, on the issue of which the prosperity and independance of the country depend? I do not propose this question exclusively to those who are of opinion that his Majesty failed in that respect which he owes to his own character,

when he failed in the promise which he gave to the nation in 1787, but to people of every rank and description, who have judgment to discriminate, and candor to decide; of these I will ask, whether it would have been justifiable in the Chancellor of the Exchequer, circumstanced as the country is at this awful moment, to have exposed (which he would have done by his resignation) the arrangements he has made, his plans for offensive and defensive operations, the distribution of the national force and resources, and the whole of his most secret measures and engagements, to men (the probable successors of himself and his colleagues) who have been in the constant habit of opposing every measure of the crown, and who might from vanity, personal pique, and a variety of other motives, change, or neglect to prosecute with vigor, measures resolved upon, and refuse to ratify or execute engagements entered into with foreign princes? If there is risk or impropriety in communicating the measures of the cabinet to those who oppose, and would perhaps gladly counteract them, that risk, and that impropriety, would certainly become greater by investing them with the power to cancel what they disapprove.

The part therefore which Mr. Pitt had to take when Majesty had imposed upon him the ungracious task of communicating the message which has created such universal disgust and alarm, was obvious; he had no alternative but that of submission, or endangering the safety of the empire; and thus circumstanced, it was incumbent on the House of Commons to have relieved him from the mortification of palliating what cannot be defended, by referring his Majesty to his message in 1787, for an answer to that part of his message in 1795, which relates to the payment of the Prince of Wales's debts. Colonel Stanly, very much to his honor, pointed this out on the very day

that the question was agitated; he very properly called upon the clerk to read from the journals, the message which ought to have influenced their proceedings, and by which alone they ought to have been governed. Sir Geo. Shuckburgh (*a*), Sir. Will. Young, Mr. H. Duncombe (*b*), Mr. Grey, Mr. Sturt, and a few others, took the same line as the gentleman who moved for a call of the house, and if some of those who professed similar principles, to the author of this pamphlet, had held the same manly language in parliament, that they held out of it, they would have a much better claim to the suffrages of their constituents at the next general election, than their conduct entitles them to at present; they would have saved by their consistency in some sort, the honor of the Prince and their own; they have brought both into question, and exposed parliament to suspicions incompatible with its credit and dignity. It is impossible that those gentlemen can have erred through ignorance; averse as I am to conferring the office of legislator on idiots, I would gladly avail myself of the plea of imbecillity to excuse a conduct which I am afraid has lain the foundation of much future misery to the Prince, and of much serious mischief to the country; but to whatever

(*a*) It is said that a number of gentlemen, as independent in their minds, as they are known to be in their fortunes, assembled at Waghornes, to discuss the most effectual means of giving a decided negative to the question of debt. This meeting made up in character, what it wanted in numbers, and if the chairman, Mr. Powys, had shewn more firmness and decision, the country would have had infinite obligations to the association.

(*b*) The advice of this gentleman had much intrinsic value in it. There was eloquence, as well as truth in the good council he offered. "*Retirement is indeed the nurse of reflection,*" and such a nurse as his Royal Highness will do well to consult, notwithstanding the advantages he may have derived from the good example, and wholesome admonitions of Mr. Sheridan.

motives this conduct may be attributed, I feel assured that not one of those who admitted the question of the debts to be discussed, were aware of the numberless difficulties in which it would involve them; it did not occur to them perhaps, that by agreeing to pay those debts, either by a sum for the specific purpose, or by the juggle of an extravagant establishment, beyond the fair claim of any Prince of Wales, and certainly much more than the object in question deserves, that they would find themselves reduced to the necessity (in order to prevent the repetition of such applications) to come to some vote, or to frame some bill, on which the nation could better rely, than on the promise of his Majesty, or his son.

It did not occur to them perhaps, that by admitting a necessity in parliament to pay those debts, they declared his Royal Highness insolvent, while by reserving an annual sum for the payment of those debts, they virtually declared him unfit to manage his own concerns; the first measure is neither more nor less than a statute of bankruptcy; the second amounts to a statute of lunacy: and thus branded, marked, and stained by the legislature, the Heir Apparent to the British throne is dismissed, bound and fettered, not only as an infant, unfit to be trusted on the score of imbecillity, but as a person who, having violated his word, is unworthy of confidence.

The House of Commons could not, consistently with their duty, have acted otherwise, after having taken upon themselves to make a provision for his debts, but they might have foreseen the dilemma in which such a measure would involve them, and have avoided it: they might have perceived the strong arguments it would furnish, not only to those who are disaffected to monarchy, but to those who think that the intellects of men ought to bear some proportion to the offices which they hold in society, and that

their rectitude should be equal to the trust reposed in them. If these reflections had occurred to those gentlemen who were most active, and who pretend to be most attached to the Prince, I do not believe that they would have exposed him to the chance of having his succession disputed, or have given the numerous enemies of royalty, dispersed throughout the country, an opportunity of asking, with an insolent air of triumph, if a man convicted of a breach of promise, and so branded by parliament, is a proper object to succeed to the throne of his ancestors? Questions of this nature, and which unfortunately answer themselves, should be avoided. I really foresee much serious calamity to the country, if parliament should take upon themselves the payment of debts, which it was no less imprudent to have made a subject of discussion, than it was reprehensible to have contracted.

It is impossible for the representatives of the people to observe too much caution, or to be too careful that their measures do not afford a pretext to those whose vigilance is ever on the watch to degrade the legislature in the public mind, and deprive it of that confidence on which the peace, security, and stability of the government depend. Sedition derives less force from reason than from numbers; but when argument is added to the latter, its strength is invincible. Those who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs will do well to give this truth the attention it deserves. There is *security* in it. They will find it contains an antidote to the poison which has been disseminated throughout the country, and they will prevent by prudence, what they may find very difficult to suppress by violence. These are not times to play with the passions, or to irritate the minds of men: the question before parliament derives its importance more from the circumstances of the mo-

ment, and the mode and manner with which it has been brought forwards, than from its own intrinsic weight; strip it of these, and it will be divested of all that is offensive and dangerous. It is from this consideration that I wish the Commons of Great Britain to PAUSE! They are on a precipice, and they cannot be too circumspect. There is more mischief invelliped in a prompt decision than they suspect, and it is possible, that with every good wish towards his Royal Highness, and under the fullest conviction that they are promoting his future interest and comfort, they may lay the foundation for dethroning him, or for cutting off his succession. They are not aware, perhaps, that by noticing his debts, they would necessarily be compelled to fetter and restrain his future expenditure, and that these restrictions, justified by his imprudence, would furnish arguments in abundance to those whose object is to subvert the constitution, and substitute in its stead what they, either ignorantly or maliciously, term a pure democracy.

The Commons are not aware perhaps that by taking upon themselves to provide for the debts, they encourage in some degree, the very turpitude and indiscretion which they reprobate; while by refusing to allow the Prince to discharge his own incumbrances, they declare him in effect unworthy of all trust.

They are not aware that such a decision (if it should unhappily take place) may hereafter be interpreted as a virtual disqualification, of which some future faction may avail itself, and on the authority of parliament pronounce the Prince of Wales incapacitated for the office of sovereign; if men who are notoriously averse to our establishments in church and state, should acquire sufficient force and credit to contend with the executive power, what

answer can be given to them, if, taking the act of parliament, which they may possibly call an act of exclusion, they should inquire, if a man under this accumulated odium, and dismissed to the world with a character impeached, sullied, and in some degree destroyed by the legislature, *is* a proper person to succeed to the throne of Great Britain?

It is to be hoped that an event so calamitous to himself and his country may never happen, and it is incumbent on parliament, called upon as it is, to guard against the possibility of it, and not to endanger, by a mistaken kindness, the rights of a man, whom it is at once their duty and their interest to preserve from ruin and dishonor.

Those who hold a contrary doctrine, and who perceive no danger from a liberality as ill-timed as it is undeserved, are very ill-qualified indeed to give an opinion on a subject so delicate and important, while those who are for lavishing the public treasure to the very extent of the demands and expectations of his Royal Highness, are infinitely more hostile to the Heir Apparent and to parliament, and certainly much more to be dreaded, than the most virulent of those who would banish the former, and supercede the authority of the latter.

I aver on the joint authorities of common sense, and common honesty, that the representative dignity and integrity, ought not to be sacrificed to the ease, splendor, or even comfort of any one family or individual whatever, and especially of an individual, who has forfeited all claim to confidence or respect, by the public violation of his word, and still more if possible by the little feeling he has shewn for the accumulated distresses of the people, whose blood and treasures have been profusely squandered in supporting his family on that throne, from which their predecessors

were deservedly driven for their exactions and tyranny—It never can pass current, in any sound and honest mind, that the security and felicity of millions are to be sacrificed to the guilt and profusion of one man, or that the interests of an entire nation are to be put in competition with the impudent pretensions of incorrigible folly. If the Prince of Wales has involved himself in pecuniary difficulties, it is HIS duty to discharge them, and not that of the nation, who having allotted a very ample sum for his income, has nothing to do with his debts—If the former allowance was inadequate, in the name of heaven let it be augmented to one hundred thousand pounds—No objection will or can be made to the increase, but let it be his concern, to discharge his embarrassments, and do not let Parliament degrade itself by becoming the assignees of a Royal Bankrupt—Let his Royal Highness go into retirement, as was recommended on Monday night, by an honest and independent member of the House of Commons—The advice of Mr. H. Duncombe is salutary, and well worthy of consideration;—it argues fidelity to his constituents, and respect for the Heir Apparent;—it breathes loyalty to the Throne, and affection to the country, and the Prince by adopting the council that has been offered, will recover the esteem and confidence of the people with a much greater rapidity than he has lost them.—In retirement he will derive advantages, by far more valuable and important than an emancipation from debt, and which from the universal change that has taken place in the minds of men, are become indispensable. It is full time that Princes should become sensible of their dependent and relative situation;—it is full time that they should

become competent to the duties of their profession, and cease to be tyrants or cyphers in their dominions.

The Bill on this important question I am sorry to find, is printed, and with a title which expressly declares, that "*Parliament will make a provision for the debts.*" I was willing to attribute to an *error of the press*, what has a direct tendency to inspire a well-founded distrust of the integrity of the House of Commons; I should be sorry to arraign the rectitude of that branch of the legislature to which I feel attached, and which, I call heaven to witness! it is my sincerest wish, should preserve its credit with the nation, but the duty that I owe to my country is paramount to all other considerations, and if the House of Commons should unfortunately betray the trust reposed in them. If they should in servile complaisance to the Heir Apparent, resolve upon providing for debts, contracted in direct violation of a solemn promise.—If they should, forgetful of their duty, become accomplices in the guilt that would defraud the country of SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS, I hope that the other branch of the legislature, the Peers of Britain! will have the virtue to come forward and interposing their authority, stand (as they have done) between a corrupt and dangerous influence, and rescue at once their country from ruin, and its legislature from ignominy.

This is the hope of every honest and well-disposed subject in the kingdom; it is the wish of every friend to order and good government; of those who, detesting anarchy, wish to avoid the necessity of an APPEAL, the consequences of which it is impossible to foresee, and which the

Commons (a) of Great Britain have it in their power to avoid by a positive and peremptory refusal to provide for the payment of debts contracted by vice and folly, and which AVARICE combined with DESPOTISM would insolently and unfeelingly extort from a generous and impoverished people.

A clamor universally prevails against the payment of the debts; and the gentlemen in the House of Commons, will do well to inform themselves of the temper of their constituents, before they finally decide on a subject which may produce a tumult in the country not easily to be subdued.

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